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This report of the First National Conference of the U.S. Office of Education Tri-University Project in Elementary Education (a project to study what goes into the education of teachers and to picture optimum learning situations for children with the aim of improving the education of teachers) includes a list of conference participants; an introduction, "The Craft of Teaching and the Schooling of Teachers," by Paul A. Olson; papers delivered at the conference; a transcript of the group discussion; and committee reports. Papers delivered at the conference include "Conceptions of Learning with Implications for Styles of Teaching Young Children" by J. McV. Hunt, "School Style: Pictures of Places Where Young Children Can Learn" by John Holt, "Images of Man and the Persuasive Style: Writing in the Elementary School" by A. L. Becker, "Children and the Language of the Schools: Styles and Forms" by Herbert Kohl, "'Other' Groups and 'Our' Children" by Douglas Oliver, and "Cognitive Elements in Maternal Behavior" and "Maternal Attitude Toward the School and the Role of Pupil: Some Social Class Comparisons" both by Robert D. Hess and Virginia Shipman. (SG)

# THE CRAFT OF TEACHING
# AND
# THE SCHOOLING OF TEACHERS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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First National Conference
The U. S. Office of Education Tri-University Project in Elementary Education
September 18-20, 1967
Denver, Colorado

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The U. S. Office of Education Tri-University Project
in Elementary Education
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# THE CRAFT OF TEACHING AND THE SCHOOLING OF TEACHERS

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The pages which follow are a report of the Denver Conference of the Tri-University Project, a USOE effort to improve the education of elementary teachers in America by bringing together for discussion and study the scholars who train elementary teachers. These may be scholars who find homes in Colleges of Arts and Sciences or in Colleges of Education. Teaching in these two locations, they may call what they do "English" or the "Language Arts," "History," "Geography" etc. or the "Social Sciences," the "Behavioral Sciences" or "Methods and Classroom Behavior," depending on which of the locations is theirs. But in either location, they may be--or perhaps ought to be--teaching the same level of information and information possessing the same relevance to the schools. The Tri-University Project was conceived in the belief that the schooling of teachers (including elementary teachers) is *the* major job, or *a* major job, of a large portion of the colleges and universities of the country. They have not always done the job well, as Mr. Bigelow suggests in the paper which follows this one; they cannot continue to do it badly. That they not continue to do it badly is the Tri-University Project's business.

The colleges and universities of the country have often not done the job of schooling teachers well partly because those who work at the training of teachers have not received anything like the financial support received by those who work at the training of doctors. The man who trains doctors is the city mouse of the American university; the man who trains teachers, the country mouse.

The colleges and universities have sometimes not done the job of preparing teachers well because the job has too often been conceived of as a job which *only* subject matter departments could do (they controlled *knowledge*) or which *only* the education departments could do (they controlled *process*). Few of us would insist--in our calmer moments and after half a century of work by Piaget and Bruner and Hunt, by Zacharias and his group, and by the various curriculum study groups about the country--that one can consider what is to be learned or studied or encountered (the facts, the logical processes, or whatever) separately from the manner of their learning, their being studied or confronted. And one cannot consider what is to be learned without knowing what is known: the most coherent or 'elegant' solutions available to problems posed in an area and the methods whereby they were reached. Yet, in preparing teachers, we have sustained in the universities and colleges of the country an archaic academic polity to puff our egos and interests. Teachers and kids have suffered.

Most of all, our colleges and universities have not done the job as well as they might because they have not created a set of scholars and teachers who at the same time know their stuff when it comes to subject matter (men who continue to think and to discover new knowledge in the subject area in which they operate) and who also can describe how the subject is apprehended. We need, we desperately need, a set of scholars who know both subjects and schools. We need trainers of teachers who teach subjects to potential teachers with a passion, a sense that what they are doing has a special relevance and must be done in a special way, because somehow, in the corner of their eye, they can also see those teachers' future students.

We do well to remind ourselves that in many areas the most advanced subject matter research problems are also educational research problems: the most advanced problems in linguistics presently are early childhood language learning problems, the most advanced theory in the fundamentals of mathematics being developed by the Bourbaki school is also the theory which Piaget has found most fruitful for his psychological investigations concerning the learning of mathematical concepts. One could go on. A curriculum for the training of teachers need not be less precise, less rigorous, or less attentive to the needs of the 'patient,' on the one hand, and to the demands of knowledge on the other, than a curriculum for the training of a medical doctor.

The Tri-University Project has brought together, for a year of study and research, a group of distinguished men and women who school elementary teachers (cf. the participants listed above). In doing this, it was looking to sharpen and synthesize what these men and women know about schools and kids, about the subject matter area in which they practice and its apprehension, and about all types of research relevant to the elementary school. It was also looking to the raising of questions which have not seriously been raised recently. The year of study is being offered at Washington (Social Science), NYU (Behavioral Science), and Nebraska (English). The participants in the Tri-University Project will, we hope, constitute--when they return to their campuses--a cadre which will make a beginning of improving the schooling of elementary teachers. This may mean securing better support from their local institutions for what they do (we are not terribly sanguine that all of them will be able to do that); it will mean trying to develop on their campuses closely and carefully planned programs jointly created by subject matter and education groups, groups which do more than talk about which course numbers go into a program, but rather what goes into the courses and what does and should go into the day-to-day intellectual diet of a student making himself a teacher. The improving of the schooling of elementary teachers will, at the very least, mean developing in our participants an awareness, if they do not already have it, both of "Bourbaki" and of "Piaget"--to turn to metaphor an instance which we proffered earlier.

The hypotheses on which the Tri-University Project was founded were, as I understand it, the hypotheses which determined how Mr. Hardy arranged the Denver meeting. The organization of the conference was a deliberate effort to suggest that the training of elementary teachers must involve an effort to mediate between the world of advanced subject matter and psychological knowledge and the world of the street and school. A technological society such as ours concentrates power in the people who have the most advanced knowledge at their disposal--the cry for black education and black power are a single cry; yet, what constitutes advanced knowledge changes exceedingly rapidly, and Jules Henry and Watts and Detroit suggest that what constitutes the "street" changes almost equally rapidly. We seem to have reached the time when we can only bring together the world of changes in knowledge and the world of social change (between which sit the schools with their conservative surface) by securing bodily confrontations over the "problem of the schools" between those who live in the ivory tower and those who live in the street.

The schools, like "Anyone" in E. E. Cummings' poem, sing their didn't--"Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter." If they are to dance their did, then the trainers of elementary teachers and their students may have to know psychology in something like the depth that J. McV. Hunt knows it, anthropology in something like the depth that Douglas Oliver knows it, and linguistics with something like the rigor according to which A. L. Becker knows that field (to point to the three advanced research scholars gifted with an eye for schools whom we invited to the conference).[1] But the new breed of trainers of elementary teachers and their students will also, given the troubles of our schools in the big cities, the areas of rural 'backwardness' and so forth, have to keep an eye on the street and the school and observe classroom behavior, long and hard, as did John Holt when he wrote How Children Fail, if they are to train teachers who do not alienate their students. They and their students will have to learn to talk to kids who know the street and the ghetto at its most difficult (Herb Kohl). They will have to know how what the home teaches and how it teaches can mesh with, or fail to mesh with, what schools do (Robert Hess).[2]

At the Denver conference, the Tri-University Project's participants and staffs were invited to spar with the conference consultants and speakers in plenary and committee session. We may have had in mind arriving at some golden, consensus opinions; we did not. What follows in this introduction is not an effort to establish the consensus of the meeting. My purpose in the section which follows is to indicate what the divisions were about. The disagreements among the participants, and between the participants, the speakers, and the consultants, were always vigorous and sometimes sharp. I can only set down one person's sense of the conference's joining of the issues in the training of teachers and of the relationships among the issues; my record has the slender authority which one acquires when he assists in editing the tapes of the speeches and discussions, trying to get at, in Desdemona's phrase, the fury of the words as well as the words spoken.

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[1] The three areas in which the Tri-University Project is working are the Social Sciences, the Behavioral Sciences, and English; Douglas Oliver, J. McVicker Hunt and Alton Becker were respectively chosen as advanced scholars from the three areas who are doing theoretical work which has a clear relevance to school conduct or curricula. All three have also given recent attention to elementary school problems reflected in their speeches and discussion.

[2] Robert Hess, John Holt, and Herbert Kohl were also chosen, each to represent the study of one of the Tri-University Project's three areas, but now in the more immediate context of the actual homes and schools where children live: Robert Hess, children's homes and the teaching they offer; John Holt, their schools and the behavior they allow or encourage; Herb Kohl, the schools and the language and imaginative culture they permit and encourage.

In 1963, Mr. Conant published his *The Education of American Teachers*. His earlier books concerning American education had received a favorable response from the general public and from persons representing the interests of the subjects treated in his books. *The Education of American Teachers*, however, did not receive such a good response. It did not, so far as I can see, have a wide effect on the education of teachers. In describing the programs offered to the nation's elementary teachers in 1963, Mr. Conant found "diversity to be the rule":

> In the 35 institutions I just mentioned, the time devoted to general education ranges from 39 to 90 semester hours; the time allotted to what might be called professional courses (except special methods and practice teaching) ranges from 11 to 29 semester hours. Special methods courses make up from 12 to 36 hours, and the time devoted to practice teaching (in terms of semester-hour credits) ranges from 5 to 14.[1]

The study found that there is "no basis for concluding that the so-called general education of elementary school teachers is better or worse than the general education of other college students"; hence, it did not have many special recommendations concerning the content of the general background courses offered to elementary teachers aside from recommending that certain general courses be taken.

In 1963 most students preparing to be elementary teachers were majoring in "Elementary Education," some were managing to build 24 hour subject matter majors in fields outside education, and some were graduating with the full major in an 'academic' department. As to the specific responses of the students to their Education courses, Conant found introductory eclectic Education courses generally damned, Educational Psychology courses generally regarded as far removed, in their concerns, from classroom practice, Methods courses half praised (repetitive), and Child Development courses generally fully praised. And practice teaching came off very well. After Conant had looked at present programs, he then went on to elaborate what he would regard as an ideal training program for the undergraduate teacher in elementary education, setting aside a block of 30 hours for what he called a "concentration" differentiated in its breadth as between teachers preparing to teach in grades 1, 2, and 3 and teachers preparing to teach in grades 4, 5, 6:

*General* (60 hours):

| | |
|---|---|
| The English Language | 6 hours |
| The Literature of the Western World | 6 hours |
| History (half or more other than U.S.) | 9 hours |
| Mathematics | 6 hours |

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[1] J. B. Conant, *The Education of American Teachers* (New York, 1963), p. 153.

| | |
|---|---|
| Philosophy | 3 hours |
| Science (physical and biological) | 12 hours |
| Economics, Political Science, Sociology, Anthropology | 3 hours |
| Fine Arts | 6 hours |
| Physical Education (no credit) | — |

Professional (30 hours):

| | |
|---|---|
| (1) Child growth and development, with extensive laboratory experiences | 3 hours |
| (2) History, Philosophy, or Sociology of Education | 3 hours |
| (3) Teaching of reading (3 hours for 4-6 teachers; 6 for 1-3). | |
| (4) Intensive workshops in the context and method of elementary school subjects | 10-13 hours |
| (5) Laboratory work, practicum work etc.; 8 weeks of practice teaching involving at least 3 hours in the classroom | 8 semester hours |

Concentration (30 hours):

Conant suggested that the 30 hour "concentration" for the K-3 teacher should be distributed among the fields of English, the social sciences, and mathematics; for the 4-6 teachers, the "concentration" should constitute a 30 hour academic "major" in either English, mathematics, the social sciences, or science. (Conant saw the teacher of the upper elementary grades as constituting a sort of subject matter specialist.)

I wish to look at Conant's recommendations from the perspective of the recommendations made at the Denver conference. This may help us to see how much we have changed in our attitudes toward the education of elementary teachers in about five years. In 1963, Conant already recognized that the course in "The English Language" which he was recommending for the elementary teacher could include varying emphases" in linguistics or traditional grammar. However, the course in "The English Language" which the Tri-University Denver conference would have recommended would almost certainly have been a course in which the primary, almost exclusive, emphasis would have been given to the former: to recently developed "scientific" approaches to linguistic description, language learning, and its social side (cf. Becker's speech and the reports of the committees dealing with language). In 1963 Conant could confidently recommend "Literature of the Western World" for all elementary teachers. We are not in 1967 so confident of that picture of literature centered in the West: Floyd McKissack can argue that "Black History, Black Literature, African Languages (i.e. Swahili) and Black Culture must be mandatory for all practicing and potential teachers, regardless of the subjects they will teach,"; more cautiously, Alton Becker can, at Denver, argue that "The image that 'culture' starts in Greece, moves to Rome, up Europe, across to England, and then across the ocean to us is the dominant academic image of the 'progress of culture'; this picture of the history of literature is one of the most harmful things which we perpetuate in our schools, perhaps the source of most of our present trouble in Asia." (Becker is himself engaged in the teaching of Asian literature as well as linguistic rhetoric.)

Mr. Conant's curriculum--save for its cursory glance at anthropology (one of four areas assigned three hours) is a curriculum oriented toward Western culture, science and philosophy, Western educational institutions. The courses recommended (Literature, History, Philosophy, Psychology, Fine Arts, Economics, the science courses) are courses which, in conventional colleges and universities, concern themselves primarily with the creations of Western culture, often primarily with Western culture in two periods: Greece in the fourth and fifth centuries B.C. and western Europe and the United States since 1800. I like the provincialism of our present college curricula. I am a medievalist and Chaucerian. I like the concentration on things Western and English. But I suspect that increasing numbers of America's elementary teachers could profit from in-depth training in certain aspects of African and Asian cultures and from the study of 'exotic' cultures--the anthropological commonplaces listed in Mr. Oliver's speech.

The United States has a richly modulated history, keyed not only to the history of those Englishmen who at first dominated the rulership of our country, or those northern Europeans who dominated it a little later, or even of those Europeans from Eastern and Southern Europe who dominate many of our cities today. Our 'history' is the history and 'prehistory' of the several million American Indians, the history and 'prehistory' of the twenty million and more American Negroes; the civilizations and pasts of the Asian peoples among our citizens, and the history of the magnificent southern American Spanish-Indian civilizations which belong to our Spanish-American groups. Our commitment to understand, know, and support non-English speaking peoples (Asians, South Americans, and Africans) is going to require further that our teachers know the histories and the cultural achievements of the regions which ought to 'belong' to all of us in imagination and sympathy. Mr. Oliver's remarks and Mr. Kohl's (cf. the Plenary Discussion section, p. 115) suggest to me that we have reached the time when the "general education" of the elementary teacher cannot be primarily a vision of the "upward march" of Western, or English-speaking peoples, unqualified by an attempt to look at the commonplaces or the histories of other peoples or through their eyes. Denver seemed to bring out that we do not know to what degree we still are 'members of Western civilization' in the sense in which that phrase is used by college professors. The colleges and universities in which we are schooled do not themselves know very well the culture, the street scene, the mythos, or the pattern of aspiration of a great many of our people. We send teachers to their children; we do not know them.

Conant placed heavy emphasis on the idea that all courses in Education, save a few in the History, Philosophy, or Sociology of Education, should allow for a consistent close observation of children and an opportunity to teach them on the part of those in training to teach--laboratory work in short. The idea was a good one. It probably would have received a certain amount of support in Colleges of Education even without Conant's advocacy of it. However, my feeling is that if the elementary teacher in preparation is to understand children's language, their 'mythoi' and games, their social ideas and milieu, in the way that some of the committees which reported at Denver suggest that these should be understood, he will require special laboratory opportunities in connection with his academic courses also. If this were done, the pre-service teacher studying literature might have time to look at the ways in which children's imaginations are educated in the street at the same time as he studied the Grimms or Chaucer. A student studying sociology might have time to look at the social structures from which his potential students come and the relationships of family or neighborhood patterns to school patterns (e.g. such matters as Mr. Hess treats, pp. 57-105 *infra*) at the same time as he reads Homans or Clark or Bernstein. The whole thrust of American practicum or 'laboratory' work should be toward self consciousness and self analysis, toward making explicit the relationship between what is done in college classes and what the teacher can do to develop his own curriculum and teach his own school classes well.

Conant could in 1963 speak of the degree to which students in educational psychology could *not* perceive how the laboratory findings of psychology were, in any obvious way, relevant to the conduct of the classroom. In 1967 few teachers can feel that way. We have had another half decade of exposure to programmed learning and Skinnerian psychology, to curriculum study center and NSF work building upon the laboratory work of Piaget and his Geneva associates, upon Bruner and the Woods Hole people, and upon J. McV. Hunt and his students. We have seen a period of Head Start work based upon the theories of the "interactionist" psychologists. Only a very ignorant student could have any doubt that laboratory models in psychology may have a powerful effect upon *what is done and learned* in the classroom; if his courses in Educational Psychology do not make this clear to him he should still know. The issue now is not whether *any* research and course work in Educational Psychology *could have a relevance* to what is done in the classroom. The issue is *which* should have such a relevance. (As I understand it, teacher education programs are in some cases providing situations in which the translation from the psychological laboratory to the "classroom laboratory" is a fairly careful and a meaningful one.) The question in 1967 is not, "Can the psychological laboratory have an effect upon what happens in the classroom?" but rather "Which 'laboratories' should have an effect?" (cf. Hunt, pp. 1-20 *infra*). *Which* pictures, having experimental validation, of how animals "learn" are relevant to learning in the human creature--the "dolphin's muck and mire" of the classroom? Systems or programs based on giving the child a token-reward for learning may produce a mastery of a certain set of details; they do not, if I read Hunt correctly, encourage in the child the habit of contemplation, of study, of struggling to find out "what is the case." Children can form hypotheses, observe the factors in a situation, and come to conclusions adequate to all that is in the situation which a physicist might label "elegant," but not all classrooms are set up to encourage this. Again, the importation of predeterminist psychological notions, in the form of IQ tests, can lead us dangerously to prejudge children; the importation of behavioristic "conditioning" systems can lead us to define, by our actions, ends for learning--goals and competitive achievements--which are extrinsic to the learning act, perhaps unrelated to it. Some learning can destroy all desire to learn.

The Denver speeches and discussions displayed a general antagonism to the appearance in present-day classrooms of much that is the common stuff of our culture: "token reward" systems; "prizes" for competitiveness destructive of the ends of learning; superior performance created by threat and tension; the use, in classroom speech and writing, of rhetorical appeals to force, threat, and received authority and the teaching of their use; the appeal to "competence models" which are so far from what children can do as to be meaningless. Insofar as such stuff is part of our general 'system' for motivating individuals, the indictment is an indictment--of the schools and of teacher education, yes--but, more, of the system at large. Education, may, of course, be called upon to exercise a prophetic role in curing the system.

Conant's recommendations seem to say that ideal programs for elementary teachers can be laid down like footing forms; students can be poured like concrete: so many hours of Child Development, so many hours of History of Western Civilization, and so forth. Conant did what the terms of his study demanded. He looked at requirements with a view to getting better requirements in the faith that better requirements will make better teachers. The same faith also underlies the state certification requirements, the NASDEC studies, the web of "requirement" recommendations by professional organizations and accrediting agencies. One of the more curious inconsistencies of the last thirty years of teacher education in this country has been between the persistent, the generally rightheaded, effort to remind elementary teachers that individual students are very different from one another and require curricula adjusted to their "needs," and the widespread failure to apply the same principle to the education of the teachers themselves. Rather trainers of teachers and certification agencies have acted as if their job were one of determining what the ideal program in the abstract would be[1]--ideal for the perfect teacher-to-be, assuming paradigmatic courses in each of the subjects prescribed in the program, masterful college teachers of all the courses, and schools, to which teachers might go, containing perfectly intellectual kids and perfectly coherent curricula. Sometimes the determining of what courses should be taken by elementary teachers has been done by the tired politicos of academe working to puff enrollments in certain subject matter or education courses, knowing them to be so bad that bludgeoning would be required to fill them.

The Tri-University Project's participants have come into the project in order to prepare themselves to "do something" about the programs for training elementary teachers in the colleges from which they come. "Doing something" about programs may mean something like Mr. Conant's proposal: the frame is set and the teacher-to-be poured into it. On the other hand, the building of a program for a teacher-in-training may mean something as different as Committee VI's proposal: "People who are preparing to be teachers and who have never taught should have more experiences with youngsters in a variety of situations, situations in which they are not placed in an authoritarian position, situations which require patient human contact; they need

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[1] This faith that "ideal programs" can be laid out informed a volume which I edited entitled The Arts of Language; it was designed to describe ideal programs for English institutes for elementary school teachers; implicitly, it also described ideal undergraduate English programs for elementary teachers. I do not describe sins which I have not committed.

'windows' from which they can watch youngsters enjoying themselves, 'windows' looking out on scenes where youngsters are truly involved [and] nothing artificial enters. [Such situations] would allow them a chance to mirror themselves [in children] so that they might decide what additional experiences would help them [to become teachers]. As [they] work, [the college] should work with [them]--as [they] size up the life experiences [they have] had and [try] to plot which... courses [they] wish to take. And it might be worth our while to start--or interrupt--our teacher education programs with an encounter between kids and the teacher-to-be and then to ask the teacher-to-be to turn back toward the college and university to pick for himself the...courses and the experiences which will prepare him (pp. 147-78, *infra*)." Here the teacher-to-be creates his own, wholly individual program. Determining what is to go into schooling teachers may mean something between the strictness of Conant and the flexibility of Committee VI. I would suspect (and here I do not speak for Denver) that one way to operate would be to admit teachers in training, at the beginnings of their careers, to a variety of kinds of classrooms where they could act as observers or paraprofessionals or tutors. One could then ask them to choose their college courses in terms of the question, "Do I know enough about subjects and about kids to prepare *my own curriculum*--one intellectually responsible--yet designed for the intellectual inscape of these or these or these kids--and in response to this latent or stated hunger?" (on the assumption that the teacher's act of thought to set the circumstances for thought may be the act which empowers the child to think). Such a program to allow teachers-to-be to school themselves would require excellent advising.

The Denver conference was about what goes into *courses* or *programs* for training teachers. But, finally, it attempted to come to a picture of optimum real situations in which children might learn and, on the basis of these, to come to a picture of how teachers might be schooled. The central issues joined were issues having to do with the contexts in which the education of children and the schooling of teachers might best be understood, with the use and the abuse of the adult's and the school's power over children in these contexts.

The context in which Conant studied the problem of the education of teachers was the context of the battle within universities between "educators" and "liberal arts" people, the related battles within statehouses over state certification and the accreditation of teacher education programs, battles involving professional organizations, departments of education, and such organizations as NCATE. Conant's aim was to give limited and realizable recommendations for change in the arena of explicitly formulated policy and of legal or quasi-legal requirement. His idea was good; the rule book red tape in education can be terrible. Yet, most of the important things in education do not get into rule books. Change in the schools has to go beyond the context of what colleges and state departments ask--course labels and the like; it has to get into the meat of the courses, the schools where teachers work, and the streets where kids live. We are obligated to provide elementary teachers with intellectual credentials, in the subject matter areas, which make them confident that they know their stuff: what such intellectual credentials in one portion of the social sciences might be is suggested by Douglas Oliver's speech and by his remarks to the plenary session (pp. 136-139;

pp. 47-56). What credentials in English might be may be inferred from the reports of Groups I, II and V (pp. 159-164, 173-179, 165-170) and from Becker's and Kohl's speeches (pp. 29-46).[1] What credentials in the behavioral sciences are may be suggested by Hunt's speech (pp. 1-46) and by the remarks of Committees III, IV and VI (pp. 146-156). To 'know' the behavioral sciences in the classroom situation is to know what a teacher who understands can make of what a student does and says. Providing courses adequate to the schooling of teachers brilliant in their craft may require that the academic departments not only provide 'labs' associated with courses but that they design courses open to all students and particularly useful to elementary teachers who need to know the basic, the axiomatic, or the fundamental in a certain area (Bourbaki and Piaget). Yet, for all Denver's implying content for courses for teachers-to-be, I doubt that many people at Denver would want a specially designed course or set of courses prescribed. The teacher-to-be must himself recognize the pertinence of what is studied.

To design a training program in a context wider than Conant's is then to go beyond what is inside courses and programs. It is to know what the office of a teacher is, and that is no easy matter in a school situation as fluid as ours. The teacher's office will be determined by the administrative and social group structure of the school in which he teaches. Frank Whitehead's Disappearing Dais, one of the texts of the present revolution in British infant school education, is a description of a change in the office of a teacher conditioned by changes in school activity: what the school does, how children are organized (or organize themselves) into groups, and how they conceive of themselves as obligated to one another. The dais disappearing is a symbol for an office changing. The kind of school which Whitehead talks about in his book and which John Holt describes in his speech cannot, one suspects, be done half way. Holt observes that older teachers could be uncomfortable in Leicestershire schools, worrying as to whether their students were "getting enough," allowing them to line up in the old way for the "teacher's praise." A young teacher-in-training could surely use the opportunity to teach in such a school as Holt describes under experienced guidance and before his sense of insecurity in the presence of the unconventional has developed. At the other end of the spectrum are such carefully scheduled and authority-centered schools designed for specific children as have been set up by Carl Bereiter. Teachers-to-be might also thrust themselves into a number of such varying schools to see how they can operate in them. If, as Hess asserts, the question is not the exercising of controls but the manner of exercising them, then teachers-to-be need to try out a whole scale of ways of guiding how children shall learn.[1]

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[1] These credentials would almost surely include thorough training in linguistics and in the psychological and sociological aspects of linguistic study as these relate to the teaching of reading, writing, the development of general articulateness and so forth. They might also involve a study of literature going beyond the "Hundred Great" certified classics for children or adults, to the mythoi, folk-narrative, games and graffiti of children presently in the schools and to materials created outside the Western stream and perhaps even outside the stream of literate culture, the study of which might improve the teacher to really know both what children "have" for imaginative worlds and what they might have.

One may agree with John Holt. Egregiously bad ways of controlling teachers and students do prevail in some large city school systems ("the rattan"). The Bundy report suggests how far the schools in our greatest city have lost their constituencies. But is there a good sort of school (say the 'infant school')? Should we not encourage, in the next few years in this nation, the creation of a series of different kinds of elementary schools where teachers-to-be may try their wings? Might we not seek to discover if it would not be worthwhile to allow for the springing up of schools as local and as different as are the enclaves from which children come? We may need differing systems of authority, control, guidance, differing systems of group organization within each school, differing kinds of "scheduling," or arranging what students shall encounter, all as differentiated as kettle drums and fiddles and tuned to the sharps and flats of the clientele of the school. The teacher-in-training may have to learn to play all of the instruments of education or give himself over to staying with one kind of school: I would want the teacher-in-training (again I do not speak for Denver) to know how to be a benign authoritarian with a dais as well as a mature guide (or invisible man) without one.

Denver did not question the right to give guidance assigned to teachers in schools. There was a great deal of dispute as to where the center of authority ought to lie in the initiation and ordering of study. Some people said 'with the student'; some 'with the teacher,' a few implied, 'with the central administration and the system.' What the Denver conference questioned, almost unanimously, was the unrecognized, half conscious, use of the enormous power which the educational system has even in its lower stages to stop an individual child cold or to give him the go-ahead--to force down the child's throat things which have nothing to do with schooling, communicating a comprehension of one's world or a capacity for free action based upon comprehension.

The abuse of power in the schools has to do with the importation into them, at their earliest levels, of a silly competitive system inimical in the long run to study; a linguistic decorum indicative only of the power of a class, race, an age group or a professional group to demand from another group's children (as the price of success) language behaviors stylized as it wants them. The abuse of power is the importation of curricular structures reflective of the power of an administrative hierarchy--or a scholarly interest group--to dictate, to prevent any humane granting to the teacher of the freedom to create or reshape his own curricula in the classroom. The abuse of power is a curricular system which asks that students learn 'generalizations' without learning the evidence, or how to collect the evidence, which led to their formation. The abuse of adult power in the school situation appears when parental authority says, "Obey the teacher; the teacher told you so; don't you get into trouble."

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[1] "The question is not whether parents (or schools) provide some kind of regulation...but the way in which they do it; do they do it in ways that cut off and squelch whatever energy, creativity, curiosity the kids have, or do they do it using some other technique--there are many ways to control kids." (Hess, p. 129).

Malign inflicting of meaningless authority upon children, wherever it exists is not, I suspect, generally consciously done. The confusion into which those who attack, and those who defend, schools or teachers or teachers of teachers fall is the assumption that a scapegoat can be found. The abuse of power is a product of the growing gap between adulthood and childhood, the gross extension of 'childhood' in the Western world consequent on the development in it of a whole series of social, intellectual and emotional spheres inaccessible to children. A modern child's father's role is as hidden from him as is the world of power in which the father moves and which stops and starts the child; the cognitive schemata of modern physical science which interpret events for adults do not interpret physical events for a child; sex and death and the world of intense emotion connected with them are shut off from him. He is peculiarly without windows or responsibilities. He is under authority because he is not part of the world of adult conceptions. Jan van den Berg, after explaining the growth of childhood as a separate state, remarks that Rousseau's "innocent child" is much more under authority than Locke's rational one.

> It is clear now, why Rousseau pushes the child away from him. The assumption that his new understanding of the child is opposed by old misunderstandings has had to give way to the view that Rousseau's understanding acts as an emergency bridge over a far too broad fissure between the child's and the adult's world. Consequently, the passages of Emile which evidence a hard and a rejecting attitude acquire a different and even positive meaning. Let us turn to them again.
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> "What the child needs to know is that it is weak, and that you, adult, are strong; besides, that, because of this difference, it is under your authority. That is what the child needs to know, what it needs to be taught, what it needs to feel." It cannot be said that this passage is exceptionally pedagogic. We are not doing any better, though, when we answer the question of why autumn leaves are red by pouring a scientific explanation into the child's ears. Even more than Rousseau intended, we teach the child with this answer that he is weak and that we (who know) are strong. We make him feel that he is under our authority (the authority of knowledge), and we teach him to realize that his state is, above all, a childlike state.
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> Rousseau, however, meant another way of feeling. A few lines before those just quoted, he writes: "Use authority when dealing with children; to reason is for adults; that is the way it is." He does not mean: "Use punishment if the child does not want to listen." He means: "Do not try to make it listen, make it accept your authority naturally." Apparently the adult has become much more subtle since Rousseau. The idea remains the same though. It is: Stay away, child, do not come too close to us, for it is danger-

ous, if not fatal.[1]

Education promises to move a young person from the world of powerlessness to the world of "power." Whether it does so in such a way as at every point to secure his sense of capacity to do on his own, while granting that capacity to him, or whether it destroys that capacity while promising it is what is in question. The paradox of modern education is that much that the adult world 'demands' is absolutely necessary to a child if he is to occupy the ecological niche occupied by a modern person who knows enough not to be all day a victim. A teacher must possess extraordinary knowledge and humanity if he is to distinguish what the school demands of children simply to symbolize its capacity for authority over them from what it legitimately 'demands' or 'woos out of them' to equip them for a niche in a technological society. To know the distinction from moment to moment in the classroom may be to awaken in the child the sense that the real stuff is worth knowing.

Teacher education which does not ask teachers to get clear about when and how they may abuse their power over children in ways more absolute and destructive than the paddle is, to my mind, bad teacher education; the colleges and universities in which teachers are trained do not know enough about the streets and the homes from which children come, about what the group teaches as to language, as to social concepts, as to *mythoi* (through narratives, graffiti, games etc.). We begin with what children have if we begin the business of education at all; we need to confront what 'schooling' outside of the school teaches. We need to know what more is the real stuff which education needs to convey and which culture cannot convey if we are to avoid the meaningless imposition of the power of the educational system. We need to know which styles of schools can mediate the 'real stuff' to which kinds of pupils in which neighborhoods--through research in the technical sense, but also through asking questions, looking and acting intelligently upon what we see.

A child develops his own way of reasoning, knowing and enjoying. He may reach toward things for himself, feeling in his own way, making his own kind of sense of the world while assimilating the culture's sense. He will not do this if he is not loved; understanding will not create love, love in the absence of understanding may look very like hatred. If the teachers whom we train know 'knowledge,' as it is, the 'schools' as they may be, and understand the child and his enclave, if they study what 'education' mediating between child and enclave and knowledge takes, they are ready. They are ready to practice the taut craft of teaching and to relax into humaneness:

> There are three conditions which often look alike
> Yet differ completely, flowered in the same hedgerow:
> Attachment to self and to things and to persons, detachment
> From self and from things and from persons; and, growing
> between them indifference

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[1] J. H. van den Berg, *The Changing Nature of Man* (New York, 1961), p. 71. The researches of Jan van den Berg (*The Changing Nature of Man*) and Philippe Aries (*Centuries of Childhood*) are particularly relevant to this point; cf. van der Berg, pp. 20-114.

Which resembles the others as death resembles life,
Being between two lives - unflowing, between
The live and the dead nettle. This is the use of memory:
For liberation - not less of love but expanding
Of love beyond desire, and so liberation
From the future as well as the past. Thus love of a country
Begins as attachment to our own field of action
And comes to find most action of little importance
Though never indifferent. History may be servitude
History may be freedom.

Education, too, is history.

# PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONFERENCE

# THE TRI-UNIVERSITY PROJECT

Donald Bigelow
U. S. Office of Education

During the next three months we will renegotiate the contract for the second year of this Project; it was always assumed that a pilot project such as this must, as a minimum, have at least two years. Therefore, while we will have to renegotiate without much evidence of what happens, this is neither unusual nor illogical. But since we will provide additional funds before we know what was accomplished, I want to take this opportunity to present fairly and squarely what I think the Office's position is with respect to this very expensive project; I would like to be sure that the thirty-six teachers who are attending this project and the teaching staffs and my fellow speakers know what we think we are about.

The responsibility of helping to spend a million dollars is not a light one; next year the Tri-University Project will cost another $500,000 perhaps; we will spend a million or more out of the thirty to forty million dollars which we have for teacher education. I want to take the responsibility of saying aloud that if we are not closing some intellectual, social, and political gaps in our society, then we are wasting your time and our funds. I must assume, in short, that the Tri-University Project will do something to close those gaps.

Let me tell you something about yourselves first by saying something about the project. It is a new group composed of trainers of teachers, teachers, schools, people in Education and Arts, asking, "Can teachers of teachers do a better job with teachers so that teachers can do a better job with kids?" You are teachers of teachers. There are thirty-six teachers of teachers in this enterprise--twelve at each of three universities--Washington, NYU, Nebraska. The colleges and universities at which you teach are listed with your names in the program of the conference.

Your schools are not the largest producers of teachers right now. According to Teacher Productivity (1966), the top twenty-five producers of totally initially certified undergraduates include Indiana University (by the way, Indiana University supposedly produced 2,959 teachers in 1966), Michigan State University (1889), Fresno State College (1669), down to Pennsylvania State University which turned out 896 trained teachers. Only one person in your group comes from one of the top twenty-five institutions in the country viewed from the perspective of 'creation of teachers'. In the United States, the production of teachers is done on an ad hoc, piecemeal basis; no place trained more than 1% of 180,000 teachers trained in 1966, for instance. We do not have the top 25 here; we have another group turning out somewhat smaller numbers of teachers, and this is both a virtue and a vice. Presumably you are more flexible in your home institutions; speaking parenthetically, you are to think of yourselves as coming from a home institution. Morally, ethically, all but legally, you are obliged to return to your own places; the salary which you are to receive is that which you would have received at the time of application or at least of acceptance at your home institutions were you there. We did not bring you here or there to have a hell of a good time; we didn't bring you here on the assumption that it was another jolly good graduate year which you as teachers deserve for working so hard for all of these years with the little bastards and their teachers. That was not our purpose at all.

We agreed to pay a reasonable sum of money to buy your services in the name of progress to get you to act when you return to your campuses. If you're here to do a job other than to improve the training of teachers on your campus, there has been a lack of communication between the program and you. This is not the John Hay Fellowship Program: you cannot fulfill the purposes of this program by sitting on a Persian rug alone and meditating with Bach playing just audibly in the background; we do not face east or west; we face in one direction--the improvement of the training of teachers who go to our schools in 1969. That is what you're here for.

I would like a year of post-doctoral work tomorrow; I should have it; I would be better and richer for it. But I could not have such a year on Tri-University money and be using federal funds; as a civil servant I do not plan to allow the expenditure of a million dollars of federal money for one purpose, when the purpose of the program is represented as something else.

You, when you return to your campuses, will have the opportunity to do the job: about 250 teachers a year are produced in one of the places from which you come; 700 a year are produced in another; 900 in another; the mean is somewhere about 400-500 teachers a year in each of the thirty-six places from which you come. And we are endeavoring to create a ferment which will spread through your influence to your faculty and their influence on that next group of teachers. Indiana University has 1955 faculty members; no one individual can be expected to influence so many. You may not be able to influence the average 400 people who are your faculty, but you may, and we are gambling that you will be able to do more than just a little.

I read the Time magazine on the plane coming out last night. There I found the story of a nice lady doing non-objective painting in England, the mother of a fifteen-year-old daughter. She painted an abstract piece and then described its meaning. "The abstract was my endeavor to depict life from the foetus to infinity--the struggle with the first flash of life. The section of rectangles indicates the cut-and-dried life one might hope to live, passing on to life's trials which are the reality. I painted this in brilliant colors because that was reality. The small white section denotes tranquility; and the circle, complete peace. To be sure," she added, "it also looks something like the southeastern coast of the United States--Virginia, the Carolinas and Georgia." I would like to think that the abstract painting I am giving you could also be recognized as your mother's garden. We are in the business of training educational personnel; that is our divisional mandate. You, thirty-six college trainers of teachers, train educational personnel. Other people also train educational personnel in other contexts, but we have made a judgment and that judgment is that you are the gatekeepers who determine what kinds of critters are to be let into the schools as teachers and how shaven and shorn they will be when they come into them.

There have been gatekeepers in our history; one would like to think that President Kennedy was one such. If the gate-keepers can symbolize the men who stand where change can occur, then you are gatekeepers.

There are other gatekeepers in the world of education: there are the scholars who work alone, and some of them, the Freuds and the Darwins, make a radical difference in the kind of civilization we create, and we could invest in the lonely scholars in the hope that one of every few million would create the changes which we all want.

We could have tried to get at what happens to kids in the classroom by working on other parts of the power structure of American education: by trying to buy the university presidents and their power, the boards of trustees and their power; we could have tried to get at the Dean of Admissions because he admits students to college--he sits at one gate. We could have worked on the alumni secretary because of the money he collects.

We might have tried to get whole institutions to do our job by buying whole institutions. We might have looked to broad groups of people collectively conceived of as having gatekeeper roles in the training of teachers: the community with its prerogative of local option, the state, or the federal government. It might be argued in theory that the local school district with its local option could do a more imaginative and sensitive job of training teachers than can the college or university since it trains *in situ*. But I doubt this. Local option in theory allows the local school board to determine what happens to the kids in the classroom; yet, it has always struck me as paradoxical that a system such as the American system which provides for local option in theory, and sometimes in practice, a system which is set up to achieve the greatest possible flexibility and variety, should have allowed for the creation of so many nearly identical schools--as if some master-mind who communicated with all other minds working on school problems and programs had said what would happen in the second grade. Now even if we had decided not to look to the influential individual and also not to the local school district, we might have looked to the state and/or federal government; and, had we looked there, we would have had to have looked at the philosophical problem--the real stuff of education in our society and asked "What does democracy do to education?" What does the 'revolt of the masses' do to create the massive conformity which in turn limits the local option whereby we individually and in meaningfully small groups could try to create new ways of creating new kinds of teachers? But we did not go to any of these larger groups; to move them would have required the total federal budget and a strength which we do not have and do not wish to have.

I said that we might have tried to buy whole institutions to do our job of putting better teachers in the classroom; and I have mentioned the big institutions: the local school systems, the state government with its 'State Department of Education', the federal government with its educational agencies, power, and personnel. I have deliberately omitted one institution which does play a gatekeeper's role and which does determine how a great many of the people who get into the teaching fold will be treated before they get into the fold. We did not ignore the university. We asked ourselves, "What in the university as a system can be changed or questioned?" We asked, "Is the university the gatekeeper by itself apart from local and state authority?" We knew the medieval university with its trivium and quadrivium; we knew the 18th Century university which created the English gentleman; we knew what Newman's university seeking knowledge for the sake of knowledge aspired to be; and we knew the modern university with its research towers and multiform think-tanks. We knew the university in its fullness, and had I not worshiped in that great high church, I would not be here speaking to you.

But we did not choose to invest in the university by itself as a gatekeeper--the university in its present form, that is. We chose to invest in you; I will get back to the university and the schools as they bear on your task shortly.

As bureaucrats in the Division of Educational Personnel Training, we are faced with the Holmesian notion of the law--a notion of the law as subject to interpretation, as contingent, and as setting for us the broad limits within which we must assume specific decision-making responsibilities as to what will serve the common profit of society and education. Holmes and Darwin and Marx have changed our conception of what the law does and what government does, and I here speak for government as it operates within the relatively new, historically speaking, conception of the law. Money is not just given by the Congress from here to there. The middle-man is the civil servant, the bureaucrat who requires all of the professional help he can get to decide to whom the money is to be given.

We have been given, in the Division of Educational Personnel Training, a modest sixty million dollars. Our division must advise the Associate Commissioner where we can use this money best. He says, "Who are the gatekeepers?" We have said, "You, you as part of the university." You are costing 1% of the money which we are getting under one authorization; we had considered the other options, and we have said, "You."

Now we have in mind that you should really keep the gates, and what do we mean by that? We mean that you should change things for the better so the kids will learn more and more easily, with more joy or pleasure or sprezzatura or whatever. We do not wish to say: "We want change for the sake of change"; "We want change because we want to have innovation, because we must show our bosses that we can create it because we hate the old." I speak as an historian who knows what tradition is for. We have no will to destroy whatever is good in the old: it could be demonstrated that American education as a system is the best system in the world; America has made more people literate, given more people a better education, qualitatively and quantitatively than any other society in history; we are more literate; we have more intellectuals; we have expectations far beyond those of Jefferson; the university has persisted and we do have great universities; we do have great research-oriented universities in an abundance that no other country can afford. But the fact of our wealth creates an awareness of poverty in us, and now we must ask ourselves "What are we going to do with the wealth?"

What are we going to do with those riches? I don't know where you want me to point.

How shall I remind you of our poverty? Do you want me to talk about the prejudice of the country? The limited intellectual base from which we operate as political beings? Do you want me to remind you that our great research universities, the high church of the educational world with their chairs and their hoods and their Latin valedictories, only in the last decade discovered "the disadvantaged," the slums, the existence of a city civilization radically different from any we've known before? Do you want me to talk about the chaos in the schools? Say what it is that you want me to say, and I'll say it. Somewhere in the cathedrals of learning there are death-watch beetles. If you think that I am a Johnny-come-lately, if you think that in the excitement of my private readings in history or in the business of my bureaucratic busybodyness, I have discovered something that you all have known all of these years, then forget about this project and any prospect of its success. The self-condemning feature of people who have trained teachers for the last 50 years is that they have told themselves and they have told the country, "We know the answers, but it's rough out there, Dad." If we begin with that premise, let us abandon the project.

Two things have happened to make change possible and, perhaps, to mitigate the roughness out there; the one is that you work as groups of twelve and thirty-six in a way in which no previous groups have worked. You thirty-six can make a nice ugly sit down in anybody's cup of coffee; the other is that, for the first time in its existence, American society has said that it is interested in the quality of American education within the framework of the republic as an entity (which is not to disparage the role of the states). The federal government has said, "We are interested"; it has put some cash behind its expression of interest, and it has said "Do something about your poverty."

Now what is the source of our failure to remedy poverty: I do believe in the great research-oriented university, but that institution has led us astray as gatekeepers--if I may mix my sheepherder's metaphor. It has led us astray by always preferring research to action, contemplation to praxis. There are times when the rediscovery of the urinary tract may not be as crucial as going out and urinating. I have now helped to give money to literally hundreds of universities and colleges; I have done this as an administrator who signs the contracts and says, "They are legal; they are fiscally responsible; God knows we are the blind leading the blind, but it's the best we can do." I have used my authority as an administrator to fund institutes. Did I buy experienced people? Oh, no! I bought people who had discovered, having taught for twenty years and having read books for twenty years, having done research hither and yon for twenty years, that they were really getting on to something now. I bought scholars; but I did not buy scholars who knew how to transform an educational paradigm, much less a society; I did not buy scholars who knew how to be relevant. The relevancy of what we as researchers do is limited by our failure to behave as if knowledge could imply action and action create knowledge; I have to say "I am Donald Bigelow (as one of the verse men says, 'with a hind name, a front name, and a signature'), and I must not only know what has happened; I must, even as a historian, make things happen." Now this view does not denigrate competent research; but it does deny the label of 'research' and the pose of disengaged study to that segment of our endeavor which only has dignity if we act as informed men rather than study as cowards in the face of certain situations. Somewhere the urinary tract has got to be conceded.

What are the areas of which I speak? The fact that the schools aren't doing the job you know as well as I do. Lest we be in doubt as to whether there is poverty and decay in our structure, let me remind you again of poverty--this time among our teachers themselves: the special educationists who continue to segregate kids on an Indian Reservation: the counseling and guidance people who have raised for us a generation of third-rate clerks who think that they wield the delicate scalpel-of-the-soul; the historians and the geographers who re-fight the Indian wars as if they were important; the people in English who assume, mistakenly, that theirs is a discipline (whatever English is, it is not a discipline) and who also assume the inherent relevancy of Shakespeare. The relevancy of Shakespeare I'll argue for; the inherent relevancy of Shakespeare I want to question. I am speaking of poverty, and if you do not like my poverty, find your own. The system is rich with poverty.

We have poverty. We also have a credential-producing organization known as 'higher education', and in that credential-producing organization a Ph.D. or Doctor of Education is the summit. A summit is a position from which one commands; we have our poverty on the other hand. The university, constructed laboriously over centuries, not just in the United States, but in twelfth century France and fourteenth century English and eighteenth and nineteenth century Europe, the university which has to be free to be 'irrelevant' in order to discover truth and develop ideas, must also accept the responsibilities of relevancy and use its wealth to do something about poverty. The universities are, in our time, in a particularly vulnerable situation. They are rich where others are poor; they have developed powerful tools which they are not using. In Texas, I had the dubious honor of telling a group of state educational agency people (they call themselves the Texas Agency down there) that teacher education is the ghetto of American education. The simple fact is that teacher education, at least psychologically speaking, is a ghetto. I have heard at least three Deans of Education assure me that it was fiscally. They can demonstrate that in the sharing of the loot, if you teach in the liberal arts college you get, say, $15,000; if you are in teacher education you get, say, $7500. Teacher education may not be a physical ghetto, but it is a metaphysical ghetto, and I am not indulging in name calling but trying to identify a problem.

If I have identified a problem, then I want to ask one question: "If there is a ghetto, who is the landlord?" That, it seems to me, is the real question which one must ask when one talks about ghettos. The university is the landlord of this particular ghetto--the whole university. If the thirty-one colleges and universities represented by the thirty-six students and the three universities of which you are a part have all tried to get rid of the ghetto and the ghetto metaphysic, they may have partially succeeded, but you know that they have not done so in any absolute way. And the general ways which have been tried have been entirely unsatisfactory as efforts to mobilize the total resources of the American university for the production of good school teachers for American schools. The university may not understand the problem. It has never, I repeat, never, paid any attention to teaching itself; and the simple fact is that the worst teaching in the United States takes place in the colleges of our country. To the degree that the drip system works, such teaching drips into the schools and produces little lectures and bad lecturers for the elementary school. Almost nobody in fair, rational discussion has denied what I am saying: good college and university teaching is the thing we have least of.

What do we have the most of? People with a degree going into research on some scholarly thing which never gets off the ground, which didn't get off the ground when they earned their degree, and which will not fly if they stand at the controls and fiddle until they reach the antiquity of Cato-the-Elder. There are very few geniuses; we need to have as large a supply as we can or we won't ever ferret out genius enough to make a go of it in our shop--the republic. But the university is not filled with research genius; it has some competent researchers who often also teach well, and it has some men who fiddle at research when they might learn to be artists at teaching. They talk rather than do.

Where is teaching talked about? In teacher education. Now you know what that is; that is *pedagogy*; that is *non-substantive*; that's *rats*. Not everywhere. Some of you have already licked this problem, but most of *us* have not. And, therefore, we have created a teaching institution, the university which does not teach and a teacher education system which does not teach teachers to teach. Therefore, the ghetto; therefore, the problem. The university with its budgetary powers and intellectual resources has not done what it might have done about teaching.

I am looking within the university to find where within the university the gatekeepers live, looking at the university in relation to the schools and state government. I'm not looking at the university exclusively because if the university continues to make and mold teachers as if they did not have to teach in real schools, if it continues to act as if the state government which pays its way and which also pays the school's way were not the same state government to both groups but ought to be a benevolent Maecenas to the universities and a miser to the schools, if the universities continue to act as if they do not owe the rest of the state-supported educational enterprise a dime, then we are of all bureaucrats most miserable; our project will fail, and the nation will be the poorer.

And what do the schools need from the universities? Let me turn the problem round and describe what the universities have tried to do to remedy the problem of the schools: we have spent a lot of money on curriculum development within our school systems and then, under Zacharias and others, in the universities and think-tanks funded by the NSF and the Bureau of Research. I suspect that all of this curriculum work is a Blue Cross operation, operating and patching. Look at our teachers. Most of them would be lost without the little book that tells them about what to do in their classes; the curriculum really isn't going to save them. Good teachers do not lean on a curriculum; they recreate it as their own or else make their own curriculum. I, unlike some of the speakers who appear at this conference, happen to believe that we need curricula but curricula are not the answer to bad teaching. We need them even if they are only substitutes, props, teaching-training devices or pacifiers to nervous teachers; we have to have curricula. But curricula are not the answer, as much as we have been led to think so across the last ten years.

The universities have also tried to provide the schools with an educational technology. It may well come that we, as teachers, will be computerized to death, and I'm not "agin" it; we ought to exploit technology to the nth degree but we cannot move the computer in to be mother and teacher and scholar tomorrow. And until university technology can become mother and teacher and scholar, technology becomes another substitute for the real job which the universities can perform for the schools. There is what we have called 'innovation', changing things around, shifting the environment in which education is done: we either take the walls out or we put them in: we are going to drop down to eight kids or eighteen in a classroom; we are going to do team-teaching or we are going to abandon it; we are going to move the chairs around or play musical chairs. Don't misunderstand me: team-teaching is probably better than single teaching, 'innovation' better than stasis. But if there is no intellectual input into the schools, if our teachers are not both scholars and artists, if what we are doing in creating curricula and technology and innovation is playing a game; and if what we're not doing is training teachers to do all these things: to use and create the curricula, to use the educational media, to use team-teaching or 'no walls' as a system, then what good is all of our effort?

Who is preparing the elementary teacher to teach with or without a curriculum, with or without walls, with or without technology as a scholar who knows his business; as a human being who knows kids and who can talk straight to them, who can let them think and think with them without pedantry, stuffed-shirting, old-maiding, or Pecksniffery? The point I would make is that the university with its ghetto and its towers, with its teaching and learning propensities and prejudices, somehow has to do the job of making teachers. We had to find the people within the university who could make it, as a landlord, clean up its ghetto; and we came to the conclusion that you, the trainers of teachers, potentially have the power. There are those who argue that the dean has the power to make a university which can make good teachers. But what power does the dean have? My colleagues and I in the Office of Education decided that one ought to begin where the consumer and his power is: with the teacher learning from the teacher.

Your Tri-University year is not a year of private study; it is within your power to make this project notable so that it will be followed. We wish to be noticed so that if we fail to reshape teacher training, our failure is an exemplum to the nation of the plight of the ghetto; we wish to be noticed so that if we succeed, we can say to the nation what can be done to the ghetto. You and your institution can train better teachers, and you know it. You are to learn and to plan this year and to act next. You have got to say, "I've been teaching for fifteen years; I know what needs to be done," and then do it. We have got to storm the fortress cathedral, called the university, and show it what is relevant in its curriculum for training teachers and what is not; we have got to lead the community to recognize that the nation needs good teachers, men who can think with kids in the classroom, as much as it needs the pagan rites of scholarship.

We have plans for fifty such programs as yours in two years, depending upon what we learn from this; we may spend 100 million or 200 million dollars in the next few years. You are the first missionaries, I proclaim. You have got to missionarize back home and in preparation for the next programs from the wealth of your experience not from the ignorance which the university forces you to remember you have. We really cannot look backward with much pride on the past history of our educational system in America unless we really wish to erect a monument to past achievement and preclude the possibility of future excellence here and now. Even if we do our job well, we cannot look forward with a great deal of comfort because if we do the job well, we will be testing our intellectual hypotheses not in the private little laboratory which constitutes our university or college but in great public laboratories, the school systems, of our country. We really cannot afford to say, "We've tried that already and failed;" we cannot afford to say that we have gained all that success can offer. A wonderful line comes from Eliot. If you know it, you understand my peroration; if I quoted it, I would spoil it. Thank you.

# CONCEPTIONS OF LEARNING WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR STYLES OF TEACHING YOUNG CHILDREN

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Perhaps I can give you the flavor of the message which I wish to bring you by relating an episode. It is an episode that I observed last night on the plane while coming out here from Chicago. A cute little blonde three-year-old had stood up in her seat and poked her head over the back to flirt, in three-year-old fashion, with the three men who were seated in the row behind her. She had quite a good thing going when dinner came. More than the pressure of her own appetite was employed to get her back down in her seat. Following dinner, she again got her head up over the back of the seat. In the meantime, the three men with whom she had been flirting, had got buried in their magazines. The three-year-old blonde looked disappointed. She disappeared momentarily, and then came back with a magazine of her own. My seat-mate was a management engineer--a Depth-Constellation-Management Engineer. As he saw the child come back with her own magazine, he remarked, "Now look at that! (Her imitation of the three men with whom she had been "flirting" was very clear.) We think we have to teach our children everything. What we really need to do is to get out of their way and let them learn."

I think my seat-mate had something, but I shall wish to modify somewhat the notion that, as teachers, we should merely get out of children's way and let them learn. I shall return to this point.

Before I try to develop my ideas about teaching, however, let me fill in the background by talking about the changes in our conceptions of psychological development which have been taking place since the turn of this century. When I talk about psychological development, I am including intellectual development, motivational development, and the development of those standards of conduct and those aspects of identity that come out of each child's encounter with his circumstances, both physical and social.

Psychologists and educators, and biologists, entered the century believing essentially in predeterminism. This belief in predeterminism arose from the argument over Darwinian evolution. Its chief exponent in America was G. Stanley Hall. He built his view of development largely on the notion that each individual child, in the course of his development, recapitulates the history of the race in his intellectual conceptions, his ideas, and his behavior. One of Hall's favorite metaphorical illustrations, one which, I am told, he told many hundreds of times, was the parable of a tadpole's tail. As you will probably recall from high school biology, if one cuts off the tail of a tadpole, the hind legs of that tadpole will fail to develop. This metaphor, applied to behavior, meant that if one interferes, by punishment or restriction, with any of a child's behavior, this interference is likely to warp subsequent stages of his natural psychological development. It is the first of the conceptions of behavioral development which encouraged a laissez-faire notion of child-rearing.

G. Stanley Hall's influence is great. Such founders of the intelligence-testing movement as H. H. Goddard (author of the influential book on the Jukes and the Kallikaks), F. Kuhlmann (author with Rose Anderson of one of the infant scales), and Louis M. Terman (author of the Stanford-Binet Scale) were all students of Hall at Clark University.

So was Arnold Gesell. Moreover, Hall's predeterministic theory of development is the root--a conceptual root--of Gesell's normative approach to psychological development. By a normative approach, I mean one that posits what is characteristic of a child's behavior at each age: two months, three months, up to a year, two years and on up through adolescence. Gesell spent his life describing these norms, and he saw no need to go further than description because he presumed that the behavioral characteristics of each age were predetermined so that his description was also an explanation.

Predeterminism was a move away from an earlier conception of development in which all behavior, and in fact organisms, were regarded as preformed. Each organ and each kind of tissue were presumed to be preformed in the egg and in the sperm. Moreover, each kind of behavior was presumably ready-made at birth. But I dare not take the time to outline the historical demise of preformationism. It had largely disappeared before the turn of the century, and predeterminism had taken its place.

At the very time that G. Stanley Hall was talking, Gregor Mendel's work in genetics was being rediscovered. Also, during this same period, a Dane, named Johannsen, did the work that was the basis of yet another view of development which is commonly called interactionism. Johannsen's work employed chrysanthemums--a long way from behavior and education. What he did was to divide the clones of chrysanthemums, to keep the genotype constant, and to plant individual plants from each clone at sea level, and at each of various other altitudes. When he did this for a number of different clones, he discovered that for some clones, maximum height of growth and earliness of flowering occured at intermediate altitudes, for some at high altitudes, and for others at low altitudes. In other words, he demonstrated that there is an interaction between the genotype, on the one hand, and the environment--in this case the altitude--on the other hand. Although the idea of interactionism had already been anticipated by paleontologists who studied fossils, it was the work of Johannsen that first demonstrated the interaction experimentally.

Since Johannsen, hundreds of similar studies have been made. The most dramatic one I know is to be found in a series of experiments at the University of Illinois by my colleague, Professor William R. Horsfall and his associates. Horsfall and his associates have been able to show that even the sex--or at least the anatomical sexual characteristics--of snow-pool mosquitoes is a function of the temperature at which the eggs go through their embryonic development and metamorphosis. I say snow-pool mosquitoes advisedly, for these ordinarily develop at a temperature between two and six degrees Centigrade. When the temperature in which such mosquito eggs undergo their embryonic development is increased to something like 29°C, all the mosquitoes that develop have the external genitalia of females; male genitalia disappear. So far, no progeny have developed from these genotypic males who have taken the anatomical appearance of phenotypic females, but Professor Horsfall has a hunch concerning why, and this hunch will provide the basis for new experiments. Now all of this does not happen with breeds of mosquitoes that are adapted to develop in higher temperatures. Thus, the interaction between genotype and environmental temperature.

Interactionism was a long time becoming a prominent force in American thought. As a matter of fact, it was considerable time becoming a prominent force even in European thought, and half a century in becoming prominent in American thought. If the experiments of Johannsen had been known, and if interactionism had been a potent force in American thought, we would have had less of the nonsense about a constant IQ. This nonsense had its roots in the notion of predeterminism which implied that both the rate and the order in which behavioral structures appear are predetermined by that batch of genes which comprise the individual's chromosomes. The genotype does make a difference--a tremendous difference--but it can predetermine neither the rate nor the order of development. Neither can it guarantee that a given set of behavioral characteristics "will out." Genius will not out inevitably; the environmental circumstances must be appropriate for the "outing."

Since Johannsen's demonstration of interactionism, we have had a number of notions about how to exploit the knowledge provided by "interactionism." One of these came with the second decade of this century when John B. Watson entered the psychological scene. It was obvious to Watson that learning made a difference, and he focused his investigative attention on learning and on how to facilitate it. Watson was, as you all know, the great environmentalist. He asserted that, if he could have any child from the day of his birth, he could make anything of him by age seven, except that he could not have done it. Watson saw, in effect, each human infant as a kind of Lockian tabula rasa. Each infant was presumed to come into the world with a set of muscles and a set of sense organs. Certain sense organs were hooked directly with certain muscular reactions, to provide reflexes. But these could be changed with conditioning or learning, and Watson saw in principle no limit to how much learning might change organisms, or children. This was essentially the environmentalist's position. A major share of students of animal behavior had been environmentalistic in their prejudices. On the other hand, a major share of those in the psychological-testing movement and of those who were students of psychological development have tended to be hereditarians.

From the battle between the environmentalists and the hereditarians came a polarity between those emphasizing learning as crucial in intellectual and even physical development, on the one hand, and those emphasizing maturation presumably predetermined by heredity, on the other hand. Learning and maturation, in Watson's thinking as I understand it, are largely a matter of sequence. The repertoire of reflexes, the little responses that one can manipulate through conditioning, were presumed to come first via predetermined maturation, and then learning got in its licks later. The controversy over heredity and environment raged bitterly up until World War II and on through into the 1950s.

Learning has been a major chapter in every introductory textbook in psychology since about World War I. Four basic models of learning have come out of the psychological laboratory. One of these originates with the work of Ebbinghaus beginning in the 1880s. Ebbinghaus thought he was studying memory. In modern parlance, he was actually studying "rote learning." His independent variable was the number of repetitions or readings required to enable his subject, himself, to repeat the text correctly twice. He then determined the number of repetitions required after various intervals of time to achieve again his criterion of two perfect repetitions. The work of Ebbinghaus has been reflected in educational practice ever since his day. The motto is this: "Read the text over and over until you can remember it without the aid of the text." Listen to the text in lectures, read the book, and then feed it back to the examiner. Thus, the lecture provides for what is essentially rote learning. In recent years we have begun to move away from this conception of learning and the educational practice which it implies.

The second conception of learning is concerned with the acquisition of skills. It is based on the pioneering work of Bryan and Harter, who published their original study in 1889. They had their subjects learn telegraphy, the Morse Code, and they went on having them learn to toss three balls, etc. They discovered the phenomena of plateaus, and the levels of organization which accounted for plateaus. The independent variable in such learning was typically time of practice. The motto: "Practice makes perfect." But practice does not necessarily make perfect, as any golf pro will tell you. It is extremely helpful to have a teacher who provides both for analysis of what is wrong, and models of what is more effective.

A third model of learning is the classical conditioning of I. P. Pavlov. While working on the physiology of digestion, Pavlov observed what he called "psychic salivation." The ready-made stimulus for salivation is food in the mouth. But Pavlov noted that various sights and sounds that preceded food in the mouth would elicit salivation in his dog-subjects. This stimulus substitution wherein events preceding the advent of the unconditioned stimulus came to elicit the response, constituted what came to be called conditional or conditioned responses. I see conditioning as a special case of what I would like to call "sequential organization." Sequential organization is based upon the fact that central processes in the brain run off faster than events. Because they run off faster than events, the perception of events early in a sequence enables an organism to respond or act well ahead of the event that originally instigated the response or action. In many ways, Pavlov's conditioning is but an objectification of Aristotelian associationism. It has been attractive because it can be applied as a kind of explanation for so many different sorts of phenomena.

The fourth kind of learning which we recognize universally today has its roots in the studies of problem-solving by animal subjects undertaken by E. L. Thorndike in the basement of William James' home. This type of learning is not unrelated to Pavlov's conditioning. When he put his animals in puzzle-boxes, Thorndike observed that they failed to see immediately the relationship between the action which enabled them to escape and the escape itself. In fact, only very gradually did the cats and the birds that he used as subjects come to utilize immediately that response which enabled them to escape. Thorndike saw, in fact, that these animals used a series of action systems. Following the criticisms of C. Lloyd Morgan, who saw no basis for attributing intelligence to animals when their behavior could be explained by more mechanistic terms, Thorndike used the term "trial-and-error." In this kind of learning, the response or action selected appears to be a function of what happens to the organism as a consequence of that action. As Thorndike saw it, actions that lead to satisfaction become strengthened and actions that lead to dissatisfaction are weakened.

A second conception of this fourth kind of learning comes largely from Clark Hull. Along with Sigmund Freud, Clark Hull saw the action of organisms in the learning situation to be the consequences from biological drives. These drive stimuli include painful conditions, hunger, thirst, and sex. Believe me, in the laboratory, the easiest way to get rats and other animals to act in the fashion experimenters want them to act is by means of such drive stimuli. On the other hand, I do not believe that teachers must employ such motivators. In fact, all young mammals, including human children, play. By definition, play is activity in the absence of painful circumstances--hunger, thirst, and sex. In fact, play is least likely to occur when such motivation systems are operating. In fact, as Abraham Maslow has pointed out, there appears to be a hierarchy of drive systems. For instance, organisms seeking to escape pain will not eat; pain avoidance dominates hunger. Animals hungry or thirsty are seldom active sexually even when sex is available. Sex will interfere with various kinds of planning, with planning to study, for instance. Frustrated plans tend to dominate curiosity and aesthetic considerations. According to Hullian drive theory, each situation with its drive stimulus and its cues can evoke a hierarchy of responses or actions. The hierarchy is based upon the readiness for a given action system to occur. Those most ready occur first, but if they fail to reduce the drive, they are weakened and others make their appearance. This theory has a great deal of truth in it, but in every human culture, young children spend a great deal of time in play. It is for this reason that I have found myself developing a theory of what I call "intrinsic motivation," a kind of motivation which is inherent in action and in the organism's information interaction with his circumstances. By informational interaction, I mean that sort which occurs through the eyes and the ears.

A third view of this fourth kind of learning is to be found in the writings of Fred Skinner. At the present time you are hearing a great deal about his "shaping of behavior" and his "operant conditioning." Skinner's approach consists in eliciting desirable behavior and reinforcing it. What the reinforcement does is to increase the likelihood of the desirable behavior occurring in the setting in which the reinforcement is provided.

Reinforcement in Skinner's scheme is not a matter of reducing drive as it was with Hull and Freud. For Skinner and his followers, a reinforcement is any kind of event that will serve to decrease the time between a child's encounter with a situation and his emitting the behavior desired--the behavior desired by the experimenter, the teacher, or the authority figure. This approach has a great deal of power; it is an especially effective way of changing specific patterns of behavior. One of the newest ways of providing reinforcement is called the "Premack principle." One of Premack's studies was designed to get rats to produce unusual responses, for instance, putting their heads up or putting their heads back. What Premack did was to watch the rat until it made the movement of its head approximating that which he desired. When it made this motion, he provided the rat with a chance to run around in a wheel. Put in the generalized systematic language of Skinner: "If you give the individual or the animal a chance to do something which has a high probability of occurrence immediately after he has made a response of low probability of occurrence, you can increase the probability of the latter occurring." But what this means in the parlance of common sense is this: "If you want to get a youngster, or an animal to do something he has seldom done, get him to do something approximating that, and arrange to have this followed by an opportunity to do something he very much wants to do. By repeating the successive approximations, you can get the youngster to come closer and closer to the desired pattern, and you can also get him to form the desired pattern quite regularly." I spent part of last Friday afternoon with Louis Bright who is the Assistant Commissioner of Education for Educational Research. He comes out of a background of electrical engineering into behavioral science. In our discussion of last Friday, he described work concerned with motivating adolescents who have dropped out of school to become interested again in things academic. After a great deal of fumbling, he and his staff at the Behavioral Laboratory of Westinghouse hit upon the Premack principle as a promising way for motivating these boys. In this case, the reinforcement consisted merely in letting the drop-out watch a couple of adolescent boys play chess; this was the high probability action. The drop-out was then taken into another room where he was asked to answer two or three questions with the promise that, once the questions were answered, he could go back out and watch the chess game. The procedure consisted in enlarging or lengthening the list of questions asked until, the first thing he knew, the adolescent was involved in a programmed learning schedule. In this approach, it was necessary to change the "high probability" reinforcements from the opportunity to watch a chess game to the opportunity to watch arithmetic games. Sooner or later, they managed to get the drop-out adolescent hooked on doing arithmetic. Mr. Bright made this story sound good, perhaps too good. One day I shall go down to Albuquerque and visit the laboratory where this approach is being tried.

I say this reinforcement system is powerful. I have seen teachers use it with youngsters where disciplinary problems have been exceedingly severe. One of the approaches is called a "token-reward system." This has been used with success by both Wesley Becker at the University of Illinois and by Ralph Wetzel at the University of Arizona. In this approach, each child has a sheet of cross section paper. Every time he achieves something constructive, the teacher stamps a star in one of those squares of the cross section paper. Or, if the youngster seated near him is acting up and causing trouble, the teacher ostentatiously puts a star in one of the squares on his paper and notes in loud voice how well he is working on the problem at hand. Nothing is said to the youngster causing the trouble; no punishment is given him, but he is given an opportunity to see that constructive behavior pays in that situation. This approach can get a classroom of children going. Down in Phoenix, Arizona, I saw such a classroom. It was a first and second grade combined. As I entered, the first grade kids had been out playing; the second grade kids had been taking regular achievement tests. When the first of the first graders came into the room and got into his chair, the teacher ostentatiously stamped a star in one of the squares on his sheet, and said: "Charlie is the first one in his chair ready for work." The second of the first graders to sit down was a little girl. Again, the teacher ostentatiously rubber stamped a square on her token-reward sheet, and said loudly: "Ethyl was the second one in place, ready to work." The other first graders began to crowd in and take their seats. This business of pointing out and rewarding the model of behavior on the part of the first two kids in the group provided an excellent kind of control.

In another program, however, I had a chance to see still another kind of "control" exercise. In this other program, the children go through Dewey-like projects. The children are Mexican-American first-graders in a program devised by Professor Marie Hughes of the University of Arizona. Their Dewey-like projects consist of baking cookies, making ice cream, etc. They go through the project, then each one of them draws a picture of the process of the project and dictates a story of the project. The story is taken down on a poster typewriter by a program assistant and is also recorded on tape. Professor Hughes thereby gets a booklet from each project on which is recorded both the quality of the child's drawing and a record of his language performance in the dictation. By comparing the successive booklets from successive projects, one can readily see how both the quantity and the quality of each child's dictation increases. One can see the changes in syntax and vocabulary that come as the year progresses. Resorting to the tapes enables one also to hear progress in pronunciation of the English language.

On the day following one of these projects, groups of six children sit around the tape recorder for which there are six plug-ins. Through their own earphones, they can hear not only their own dictation of the project of the preceding day, but they can also hear the dictations provided by each of the other five children in the group. They argue about how this and how that went, and they also argue about the pronunciations of various words. Remember that these children are Spanish-speaking, and they are learning a second language in the first grade. I saw a pair of youngsters get up when they couldn't agree as to whether one of our irregular verbs had an "-ed" on it or not and take it to the teacher for her judgment. The teacher, I thought quite skillfully, put her arm around the youngster who was wrong and pointed out that the other youngster was correct, but this particular verb in past tense does not have an "-ed" on it. She added a little extra explanation, and the children went back and started on the business again.[1]

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[1] Hunt is here not referring to a correction of usage, but to a teaching of inflectional endings to the "English-as-a-second-language" students.

I hope my description of this program of Marie Hughes' gives you a little of the flavor of her teaching operation. In that program, the children got a great deal of verbal approval when they came up to show the teacher, the program assistant, or one of the aides, some accomplishment, but this was not reinforcement in the sense of being applied directly contingent with the action concerned. I found something interesting when I talked with the youngsters in Marie Hughes' program. I could get them involved in discussions about pronunciation in conversation; I could get them involved in talking about their projects. They had the same sort of interest in these projects as professional people have in their work. Now, when I talked to the students in the "token-reward" class, it was difficult to get them to talk about subject matter. In the "token-reward" approach, the child can trade a given number of stars stamped on the squares of his page for a prize. One of these brought me a boat that he had just won. It was hard to get this youngster to talk about anything except about how one wins prizes. I could not even get him to talk about what he would do with the boat. When I asked if he got into it in the bathtub, would it sink? he laughed in dumbfounded fashion, so apparently I was the freak in this system. Apparently, the important thing to learn was how to get prizes, and the children I talked to had certainly learned this by heart.

Despite the power of both the classical conditioning of Pavlov and the operant conditioning with reinforcement from Skinner, there are limitations. First of all, by and large these laboratory models of learning have been designed to secure but short-term effects. You can get short-term effects, however, that are very important. Even in education, they can be very important as ways of correcting what parents and other teachers have done wrong; what the culture has done wrong. There are powerful ways of correcting the effects of the previous encounters with circumstances in the lives of some youngsters. On the other hand, I question whether they are good educational devices, but my mind remains open on that matter. I do feel that there is a defect built into the models in that they appeal to the wrong portion of the hierarchy of motives which Maslow has talked about. I refer to the fact that neither animals nor children will eat when they are in pain or fear of painful stimulation. In other words, pain avoidance dominates hunger and even thirst. Hunger and thirst, in turn, will dominate sex. Often sex will dominate plans, for example, the plan to study on a given evening when a lad calls. In turn, plans tend to dominate aesthetic interests.

The implication of this hierarchy calls into question the launching of the appeal to learn from a platform of either avoiding punishment or of "token-rewards." Habits inculcated by such reinforcement are all too likely to be so rigid that they cannot readily be changed by mere encounters with information which indicates that they are wrong or ineffective. Furthermore, insofar as the individual child becomes oriented to either the pain avoidance or the getting of rewards, remove the threat or the reward, and you're likely to find his motivation for the desirable learning behavior has disappeared. This I believe is what happens to those who have been outstanding students in high-school, because their parents stood over them with either threats or extrinsic rewards, and who then fail in college when they are free of parental discipline. The trouble with such extrinsic reinforcement systems is that you have to have somebody there all of the time to administer the rewards at just the right time. If a mother has a family of small children, as some of you know, being there all the time is very difficult. Thus, the teacher with thirty-five, forty, or fifty children is divided as many different ways as she has children. Being there to reward each response is simply impossible. This is one of the bases for the Head-Start prescription that no teacher should have over fifteen children in a class.

Moreover, this view that learning depends upon the administration of reinforcement outside the task itself simply leaves out of account the fact that all animals play, and that all animals and children are avidly interested in their play. I want to emphasize the importance of learning which is like play in that it has no other end in view. There may well be reinforcement, but that reinforcement derives from completing a self-initiated task or following the attraction of a novel or slightly more complex version of something in which the individual child has already become interested. I want to call your attention to the fact that during most of the hours of the day, no one can be there to administer a reward for each constructive action, for each small cubit of growth in understanding, or whatnot. The point is that the kind of motivation in play, a kind which I call "intrinsic motivation," has tremendous educational potential. This is the educational potential that I would like to harness.

Now I should like to go back to the moral of my introductory episode. We can get out of children's way, as teachers, only by preparing the environmental circumstances so that these circumstances and the child's interaction with them will encourage the kinds of abilities, motives, and standards that we want to encourage: the kind, in fact, which are demanded by the technological level of our culture. Our technological culture provides us with an educational mix from which we really have no escape.

## Still Other Kinds of Learning

Consider the other kinds of learning which the chapters on learning in our elementary textbooks of psychology say nothing about. (I have written a paper on this topic which describes a dozen of these, but the dozen can be broken down in various ways). Let me describe a few of them: those I think to be of special significance for your concerns.

Textbook chapters seldom talk about what one might call adaptation or habituation. This is certainly a form of learning, if one defines learning as changes in a child's behavior resulting from encounters with circumstances. Adaptation is a phenomenon usually considered under receptor processes. You know how a continuous encounter with any given substance of odor gradually results in the disappearance of the odor. Even a skunk ceases to stink if it has been around for sufficient time. Something similar occurs with repeated encounter with any given change in the characteristics of an input. This is what we call habituation. The effective stimulus for the response of turning attention to something is a change in the character of the input. These changes in input have not only attentional value, but arousal value. With repeated encounters, their capacity to evoke attention and arousal disappears. One can even become habituated to painful stimulation. Perhaps I can illustrate this phenomenon most clearly for you by asking you to consider the reading of the same detective story four times. During the first time through, the story is fascinating; the second time, I find it hard and so would most of you, but the fourth time through is sheer agony for anyone.

For teaching, one of the implications of these phenomena of adaptation and habituation is the fact that real boredom arises from repeated encounters with a given pattern of events. This is a matter that most of us have not thought through as educators and as psychologists. In preparing the environment to elicit interest, it is absolutely necessary to provide the child with an opportunity to encounter novelty, change, and increasing complexity.

Increasing complexity is especially important. For us to pull the child along motivationally in some specified direction, it is of especial importance to provide him with an opportunity to encounter increasing levels of complexity in each line of interest.

A second form of learning which is given little consideration in our textbook chapters consists in the coordination of simple systems of operation into progressively more complex, hierarchically-organized action and thought systems.

Several lines of investigation indicate that those systems which are ready-made at birth are not simple reflexes, but are rather, much more complex systems. Thus, Piaget speaks of sucking, looking, listening, vocalizing, and such motor action of the trunk and limbs. I find it interesting that there is as much correspondence between the systems Piaget found in his newborn children and the systems which neuroanatomists who are interested in functional relations have turned up. Thus, the neuroanatomists speak of the visual system, the auditory system, the olfactory system, the vestibular or balance system, and so forth. These systems look as if they may be basic ready-made systems at birth. It is also interesting that those, like Ashby, who have tried to figure out how an electronics engineer would go about constructing a brain to do the kinds of things that the human brain does, have come up with the idea that one would have to have several such complex systems as those I have named, so that the individual's encounters with circumstances could coordinate and develop these systems.

Most of you know that hand-mouth coordination appears very early in infant development. As a matter of fact, thumb-sucking, which involves such coordination, has been reported in utero. But much more interesting is the way the eye-ear coordination comes about. This coordination occurs when something heard becomes also something to look at, and the child is able to localize the source of sound. Imagine putting a snapper down here beside a child's crib out of sight. In the first weeks and months of life, the child can be excited by hearing the snapper, but he does not look for it. On the other hand, if he has had a number of experiences where the snapper had been followed by something which appears and can be seen, then eventually the relative loudness of the place of the sound leads to looking on the side where it is louder. Such learning appears relatively early; surprisingly, such learning can occur during the first month of life. Footsteps getting louder has repeatedly signaled the fact that "somebody is coming" and if footsteps getting less loud have signaled the fact that "somebody is going," one can readily see the anticipation and disappointment associated with each.

Eye-hand coordination is another such coordination of ready-made systems. Evidence exists that this particular coordination can be greatly modified by circumstances. At Harvard, Burton White, who is in charge of the early childhood education program at the School of Education there, has been investigating this coordination at the Tewksbury Hospital. There, he has access to the babies for the first six months when they are farmed out to foster homes or for adoption. White started by making a normative study of the process of the development of attention and of visually-directed reaching. To measure attention, he simply puts the child in an infant chair with a batch of things around, and he records the proportion of time that the child looks at one thing or another. Simply encountering things that the child can see and manipulate, beginning even at two weeks of age, actively hastens the development of visual attention. In the case of eye-hand coordination, or visually-directed reaching, at two weeks or three weeks, when the infant is presented with a visual target, nothing happens. On the other hand, at something like about two months of age, when they are presented with a visual target, they show a great deal of excitement and flail their hands. But the hands are fisted. Moreover, they do not go to the object. This is what White had called fisted swiping. Later, the child is able to do mature reaching in which the hand is shaped ahead of time to grasp the object seen. This is the terminal stage of visually-directed reaching. In his normative study, White found this mature level of reaching at a median of 145 days of age. He then undertook an enrichment process in which he put a complex object over the crib. At first, he made the situation too complex. The infants could not escape this object. It was right over them. As a consequence, they not only cried more than the normative group, but their development of attention slowed up to about 70 days of age. At this point, their visual attention began increasing rapidly, and the age at which these infants manifested mature reaching was reduced to a median of 105 days of age in place of the 145 days in the normative study.

White then simplified the visual enrichment. Beginning at two weeks, he provided on either side of each crib a white disc with a red nipple in the center. The child could thereby look this way and see the white object with the red center, and he could look that way and see the other one, but he could readily escape both of them by simply looking up. Later, the more complex gadget was put over the crib, and the age of mature reaching was cut down from the original 145 days to 105 days, and now to 85 days. If you wish to think in terms of developmental quotients or IQ, this is a shift of approximately 70 points for that particular item. In the terms of learning, it means that the opportunity to use one's visual system and to combine it with hand motion can greatly hasten the development of that eye-hand coordination that terminates in mature reaching.

You may ask if increasing the developmental quotient by 70 points at such an early age is good or bad. This is one of the first questions typically asked me. An interesting thing, I believe, is this: when the child cannot escape the environmental circumstances calculated to be enriching, when the child cannot take it or leave it, its effects can be bad. In White's study, I called attention to the fact that the second group of infants, the ones exposed to his first and massive enrichment program, cried a good deal more than did those who had been in the normative group. They also were slower in the development of visual attention. Those complex stabiles over the cribs beginning when the children were only a month of age, were apparently oppressive because they could not escape from them. Many of our culturally-deprived youngsters encounter such oppressive circumstances on the auditory side. Their world is so noisy that they have to learn to tune it out. What they do is presumably to habituate the noise. Once they have become habituated to loud noise, it becomes hard to get them to attend to the vocal noises that they must listen to to learn language.

Consider another example of this matter of use facilitating the development of sensory-motor system. At birth, infants can see clearly only objects about ten inches or a foot from their eyes. They lack the ability to accommodate visually, that is to see clearly things that are close up or far away. The blink response depends upon a well-developed ability to accommodate, to see clearly at both far and near. The blink occurs only when the child can follow something approaching his eyes quite rapidly. In the summer of 1966, David Greenberg, one of my students at the University of Illinois, took two samples of ten home-reared infants. For one of these groups of ten newly-born infants, he got the parents to agree not to put any object over the crib for a period of three months. Inasmuch as we have been experimenting with the objects over the cribs for several years, it was not easy for him to find this group. For the other group of ten, he arranged a stabile pattern, to be placed about ten inches above the infant's eyes, beginning at four weeks of age. The upshot of the experiment was that the age at which this blink response appeared averaged about ten and a half weeks in our control group that had no stabile pattern over the crib, and seven weeks in the group that did have a mobile over the crib.

Now the development of eye-hand coordination and the development of the blink response are not themselves important. What is important is that we have not yet seen the degree to which preparing the environment can have a cumulative effect on the development of infants as they go along. If one simply "arranges the circumstances to foster growth," one is not there teaching in the conventional sense; one is not there reinforcing each behavior as it comes. But if one arranges the circumstances to foster development, important changes in the rate of development may well happen.

## The Epigenetic Course of the Development of Intrinsic Motivation

Pulling children along by means of the prepared environment is based largely on what I like to call "intrinsic motivation." This is a form of motivation which, as I have already tried briefly to indicate, is quite independent of pain avoidance, homeostatic needs, and sex. It is a form of motivation which is inherent in the organism's information processing and action.

This form of motivation appears to have its origins in what the Russians call the "orienting response." This is that response of attending and arousal which is evoked by a change in the character of any particular kind of input.

Now as the very young child repeatedly encounters any given pattern of input, it acquires recognitive familiarity. This recognitive familiarity appears to have emotional significance. Early in life, it appears to be one of the first bases for emotional attachment and one of the first factors in it. I must admit that, as we checked this hypothesis out, our first experiments came out much better than our later ones, so the evidence here is not as good as I would like it. I may, nevertheless, be able to clarify the hypothesis by taking an analogy from ethology. The ethologists speak of "imprinting" in birds and various other animals. The bird will form an attachment to the first object seen for any period of time after hatching. Thus, ducklings hatched under a hen will follow a hen, and it is quite possible to use birds from diverse species as foster mothers so long as they get seen first after the hatching. This is the work of Conrad Lorenz about which some of you know. Birds often learn their songs also from the first ones they hear.

The duration of perceptual contact required to produce attachment appears to increase considerably up the evolutionary scale. In birds, as already indicated, it appears to be a matter of but minutes. In the ungulates--cows, deer, sheep, etc.--it appears to be but a matter of two or three days. In fact, lambs prevented from seeing adult sheep for as long as two weeks appear to become forever loners without the gregarious impulse that makes them huddle together, even in a storm. It is such observations that have given rise to the hypothesis of "critical periods" in behavioral development. In the baby monkey, it is something like ten days before the infant learns to recognize its mother and becomes attached to her. For the infant chimpanzee, it is something like five weeks, and for the human infant, it is something like five months. This increase in duration of perceptual contact required for emotional attachment may well be a function of the fact that that portion of the brain which is connected with neither receptor inputs nor motor outlets increases sharply up the evolutionary scale. It would appear that as this portion of the brain becomes a larger and larger fraction of the whole, organisms require more and more perceptual encounters to establish the basis for recognition.

The next phase in the development of intrinsic motivation is interest in novelty and increasing complexity. Recognition is important in providing the individual with a standard from which some new input can be novel. It also appears to provide the individual with a position of security which fits him to learn. Where one is completely surrounded by the strange and complex, it is as difficult to learn as when one is completely surrounded by the boringly familiar. When one sees someone who is familiar while one is in a foreign country, that someone is likely to be exceedingly attractive even though one did not even like him at home. (I spent five weeks in Iran in the summer of 1966. There, signs in English were often a great relief. I got so that I could read the Arabic characters for numbers, but I never got so I could read anything but the words for restaurant and Tehran, Iran, in the Arabic alphabet. English was awfully welcome, especially in restaurants.) What I am describing as my subjective response to the familiar in the context of general strangeness is typical even of the rat species, as Dr. Alice B. Sheldon of George Washington University has discovered in her investigations. In those studies, the rats preferred to enter strange boxes which contained objects which had been in their own cages over similar strange boxes that lacked anything familiar. In the human infant, the attraction of things newly recognized is probably in part responsible for what has been called pseudo-imitation: the tendency to imitate familiar vocalizations and activities. You can demonstrate this for yourself. Get a youngster who is about three and a half or four months old, and hold him thus as you talk to him. Say: "You're a fine little baby, a very fine little baby," in typical adult fashion. Then, find out from his mother the kinds of noises he has been making. Practice making these sounds until she agrees that they sound like the infant's. Then, look back at the infant and make these sounds that resemble his own: "Ow-ow-ow-ow-ow-ow." Note how his pupils widen, how his eyes open, how his mouth goes, and sometimes, you can get the child going, "Ow-ow-ow-ow" back to you. You get conversation. You get a relationship, if you will. It is conversation without either semantics or syntax, but it is conversation, nevertheless.

In somewhat older children, you can demonstrate the next stage; the "Ow-ow-ow-ow" routine has become boring stuff. It will not elicit the pupil widening, the eyes widening, the response, but if you know the child, you can modify the sounds he makes, and get the imitation back on the basis of the novel variation. Such a shift in interest from the familiar to the somewhat less familiar, and from there to the much less familiar is probably exceedingly important in the process of learning language. It is this interest in the novel which presumably entices the child to begin to imitate patterns of speech which do not already belong in his repertoire. I am trying to test these notions in the course of an investigation concerning how best to foster psychological development in orphanage-reared infants. This investigation is underway in an orphanage in Tehran. At this orphanage, some ten years ago, nearly two-thirds of the infants were not sitting up in their second year of life; and some 80% of them were not yet walking in their fourth year of life. In the decade that has intervened, the Pahlavi Foundation has in some way weakened what I hoped might be a very dramatic experiment. It has long been observed that orphanage-reared children are apathetic and retarded. What I hope to determine in my investigation is whether one cannot greatly reduce the apathy and retardation by such mechanical means as putting stabiles over cribs, and by playing tape recorders that go on and off during the first months of life. In short, I hope to foster psychological development simply by preparing the environmental circumstances, and not the social circumstances for learning. As these first things become recognitively familiar, and as the infants try to retain perceptual contact with them, we shall arrange the situation so that they can make the visual patterns move by shaking their legs, and they will be able to start the tape recorder for 15 seconds of sound simply by shaking their legs.

Let me digress from my point on language further. In our various investigations of home-reared infants, we have discovered that some babies even less than two months old begin to shake their legs to make a mobile move. Presumably the contingency between the mobile's motion and their leg-shaking is at first fortuitous. But shortly, a connection appears to be established, so that they shake their legs; the thing goes; they laugh; and when the thing stops, they quiet down, then excitedly shake their legs and watch the object move, and laugh again. It is my guess that the infant who so behaves is developing the beginnings of intention. When he shakes his legs, he definitely acts as though he anticipated the motion, and so long as the mobile remains in motion, his legs remain quiet while he laughs. Similarly, as the child reaches toward something, it is something he wants to get. It is this kind of encounter that we propose to make available to the children in the orphanages.

Now let me return to my language hypothesis. If I am at all right in my theory that what is becoming recognitively familiar in young children is desirable, then what the tape recorder presents to the child's ears should have an effect on what he vocalizes. Thus, in the experimental group, one half of the infants will get 15 seconds of sound track that sounds like the front vowel (e-e-e-e-e), another group will get the back vowel (uh-). Now if my notion is at all correct--and I have absolutely no supporting data at this point--the youngsters who hear the front vowel (e-e-e) ought to utter a different spectrum of vowel sounds from those uttered by those youngsters who hear the back vowel or "uh" sound. I should be very, very surprised if the one group came out merely with the front vowel of "e-e-e", and the other with the back vowel of "uh", but the spectrum of vowel sounds from the two groups should show a different distribution of proportions of front and back vowel sounds.

The phenomenon of habituation plays an important role in the development of the interest in the novel and more complex. One can observe this very early in the development of an infant; one can see it all the way through life. This interest in the novel, the new, and the more complex is really a kind of corollary of the habituation process. Repeated encounters with recognition lead to boredom. It is then that the new becomes the interesting thing.

But the infant's stance toward what is new changes as he encounters an increasingly wide variety of circumstances frequently enough to make them recognitively familiar. Once the infant has learned to recognize a variety of things, it almost looks as if he comes to a new generalization. It is as if (and I say "as if" with emphasis) he were saying to himself, "Things ought to be recognizable." In this new stance, when he is presented with something novel, something still unrecognizable, he faces a task, the task of recognition. Where at the earlier stance, looking time probably represented the hedonic value of the object, now looking time is not merely a matter of the hedonic value of the thing looked at because he has the task of making it recognizable. One can see this in adult behavior. I have a cubistic painting of a falconer in my study. When my mother has visited, she has often remonstrated, "Joseph, how can you have an awful picture like that up there." But in the meantime, she is looking at that picture--all the time. And she has often looked at it for fifteen or twenty minutes at a stretch. I no longer look at it very long. It's old stuff. But it is as if she were trying to make this cubistic broken pattern into some continuous, more familiar pattern. It is thus that, I argue, infants who have reached the stage of interest in novelty, looking has become a task. It is no longer tied up with hedonic value, pure and simple. At the same time, once the infant begins to show intense interest in the novel, he also begins to show an interest in progressive complexity. One might even say that the child gets hooked on complexity; it's like marijuana or, better, like the opiates.

In our culture, we have all been to some degree, hooked on complexity if we are free in our encounters with information and with opportunities for action. Again, a parable: this one based on an experiment on rats by Dember, Earl, and Paradise at the University of Michigan. They put the rats into a figure-eight maze arranged with a door between the two circular compartments. The wall of one circle was painted solid; the other was painted with horizontal black and white stripes. The animals were put into the maze for an hour. The experimenters simply recorded during the first hour of encounter, the proportion of time that each rat spent in each of the two circular compartments. No attempt was made to predict the part in which the rat would remain most of the time during this first encounter. But after the rat had been in the maze once, and was given a second exposure of an hour after an interval of 24 hours, the theory predicts that if the rat changes the compartment where he spends most of his time, he will change from the less complex to the more complex one. Those rats who made changes were all among those who preferred the compartment painted in the solid color the first time, and then the one painted with the black and white stripes the second time. Of thirteen shifts, twelve were in the direction predicted. Do you see the point? Even at the level of rats, if one starts with a choice of the more complex of two circumstances, then there is no change to the simpler. But if the rat starts with a preferance for the less complex of two sets of circumstances, he will change in a search for more complexity. This interest in complexity operates in the domain of action as well as in the domain of perception. Fascination that children show as they are learning such new skills as walking, climbing, etc., appear to be based on this interest in increasing complexity. It appears to me this interest in increasing complexity of action is the basis for what Robert White, at Harvard, has called "competence motivation." One finds it at the adult level, also, for note that one finds it quite boring to play a favorite game with one less skilled than himself.

On the other hand, it is also true that it is not fun to play that favorite game with someone who is very much more skilled than is one. There is an optimal of complexity. On the other hand, complexities do not operate under the principle of an adaptation level. As one becomes accustomed to a new increased level of complexity, there is no novelty in reverting back to the less complex. On the other hand, when one has become accustomed to a given intensity of light, or sound, a change to less intensity is just as effective as novelty as is a change to increased intensity. The interest in complexity is unidirectional. It is always in the direction of the more complex, and never in the direction of the less complex. This is true for any domain, whether it be musical scores, crossword puzzles, motor skills, or competitions.

## Complexity and Competence Models

Very little research on the search for complexity as a principle in the process of development has been done. Yet as I see it, this principle is the basis upon which one can motivate a continuous process of learning. In fact, it seems to me to account for what Froebel called "growth motivation" and what John Dewey also referred to by this term. The complexity of the action and behavior of another child as the model for imitation is an important factor in the child's interest in developing his own competence. As an infant gets to a given stage where he can perform a given kind of action, then a somewhat more complex model of that action appeals to his interest. But the presentation of the next level of increased complexity requires a nice judgment. When the increase is too great, the child's increased interest in the model becomes a basis for frustration. We have movies of youngsters taken by my colleague, Dr. Uzgiris, to whom we have presented models of various kinds: vocal models, single-motion models, patting this way, making various kinds of gestures, working with blocks, etc. If the model presented for imitation represents old stuff to the child, he leaves the field out of boredom. He simply walks away, uninterested. On the other hand, if one makes the model for imitation too difficult, so difficult that he really can't cope with it, then one gets an angry explosion. One sees a child who is not yet ready to try to make a tower, and when he is presented with the model of the tower, he simply knocks the blocks down and throws them around. For the child who is not ready yet to crook his index finger, when he is presented with the examiner crooking her index finger, he pushes the hand away, and if the model persists, tears and anger result. Such are the reactions when the model gets too "tough" or too complex.

Obviously one cannot always judge whether the model is too complex or not. It is highly important that the child should be free to take it or leave it according to his own inclinations. It is only when children face disapproval or the loss of love for failing to accept models that are beyond them that difficulty results. When the complex model does motivate, when the child is interested, this interest on the child's part is the best cue that the model is the right distance from the child's established competence.

## Learning Sets

That repeated recognition leads to the notion that things should be recognizable is, I believe, a kind of "learning set." That repeated success efforts to retain or to regain perceptual contact with interesting spectacles results in a kind of alertness is, I believe, another example of "learning set." By "alertness" I mean that, even in the first several months of infancy, if the environment is properly prepared so that the child can regain perceptual contact with the spectacles which interest him, it is as if he came to say to himself, "If I do something, I can make something interesting happen." One of the first learning sets that was ever observed in child development was the behavior implying the notion that "things have names." This is based upon Ann Sullivan's report of Helen Keller at the pump in the incident where she learned the difference between water and cup. That was followed by a number of other distinctions, then came the behavior in which Helen would touch various objects and put out her hand to have the words spelled into her hand. Another such learning set involves the assumption that things come in groups. It would also appear to me that many of Chomsky's linguistic rules are derived from encountering the same syntactic orders perceptually over and over. Little Darius, the son of an American anthropologist and his Iranian mother (she is also a student of linguistics and my collaborator in Iran) at eighteen months says to his American grandmother "Gama" with the accent on the first syllable, and to his Persian grandmother, he says, "Gama" with the accent on the last syllable. He has acquired one of the super-segmental rules for each of the two languages, and he has managed this acquisition in the first year and a half of his life.

Many of the strategies for getting and processing information appear to be "learning sets." These include the concrete operational strategies of Piaget in which the child is involved chiefly in thinking about what he has observed. They also involve the formal operational strategies, also of Piaget, that develop at about the beginning of adolescence and involve the creation of a logical grid, and thinking that directs observation and then interprets observation in terms of a formal system of logical possibilities. So long as children are at the level of concrete operations, discovery learning appears to be a method of teaching of choice. It does little good simply to lecture to students at this age. Once children have acquired formal operations, however, beginning with adolescence, it is quite sensible to teach by talking to them. But one can teach very little in this talking fashion until fairly late adolescence, and, if a full repertoire of these learning sets and strategies for making sense of things have not yet developed earlier, you cannot teach them by talking even in adolescence.

## The Problem of the "Match"

What I like to call "the Problem of the Match" is highly important in the strategy of teaching. This problem of the match we have already encountered in the matter of getting a model for imitation which is not less complex than the level of competence that the child has already achieved, that is neither too complex to be frustrating. Frustration and disconfirmation have always been major ways of inducing learning. They illustrate a principle of importance in this matter which I call the problem of the match. In educational circles, the match has been recognized by what has been termed "readiness." And "readiness" has typically been conceived to be a preparation for learning that comes via that process of maturation controlled entirely by heredity. It is thus, that at six years of age, all children are presumed to be ready for school and ready to learn to read. The school itself commonly constitutes a fairly fixed set of environmental circumstances. All of the children in a given city are presumed to have approximately the same set of readinesses regardless of which side of the tracks they come from. It is clear, however, from comparisons of the linguistic and cognitive skills in children from the suburbs, that they differ markedly. Once this difference was attributed to differences in fixed intelligence. The children of the slums were simply stupid and poorly motivated, and this was considered to be the nature of the little brutes. Our tests of intelligence tend to bear this out, and when the children from the slums did less well in standard school environment than the children from the suburbs, they were still doing as well as could be expected--from the tests. From the standpoint of the interactionism, underlying the kind of points I have been making, such an interpretation of class difference is no longer sensible. Readiness for any given kind of teaching or encounter with circumstances is not a matter of fixed intelligence, it is a matter of the linguistic and cognitive skills which have been developed in the course of the child's life history. From the standpoint of this "match" the task of the teacher is to find the kind of circumstances, or the mode of approach which will interest the child and induce learning.

It is no easy matter to do this, for the diagnostic instruments that we have have not been geared to a natural science of intellectual, linguistic, and motivational development. Mental ages are somewhat helpful, but not very. We are, at present, very weak in our development of what I would call "transitive tests," tests designed to tell us what learning sets and skills a child already has established and what kinds of things to confront him with to induce learning. We have very few tests that tell us how to prepare the circumstances to foster learning. At the present state of our knowledge, I believe that the best cues we have come in those behavioral indications of interest and surprise. When the child is interested, we're on the right track.

I believe it is safer to arrange the circumstances in such a fashion that the child can take them or leave them as inclinations dictate. I am not sure of this in the case of culturally deprived children, for it may well be necessary to use some of the reinforcement techniques to change the child's motivation from one already spoiled by his impoverished circumstances before he can begin to learn. On the whole, I contend that when the child is not interested, when he's bored, then one had better increase the complexity of the circumstances that that child is able to encounter. When he is frustrated, when he is angered, those circumstances are too complex. When he's interested, and even when he's somewhat surprised, one is probably on the right track. This holds for materials and models. What Montessori did, from the motivational standpoint, was to provide graded series of models by using children from three to seven within a given class, and a provided series of complexity in the various kinds of materials that she prepared for her children to work with. One of the implications of the position I am presenting is that one should arrange the circumstances in the fashion that allows the child to make the choices about complexity which he wishes to encounter. This, I believe, was the trick that Montessori used. Last spring I had an interview with Daisy Mae Jones, Professor of Elementary Education at Arizona State University at Tempe, Arizona. Professor Jones is dreaming of a school, of creating a public school in the new town of Litchfield Park near Phoenix, where she will have four, five, and six-year-olds together in a room. Because the school is tax supported, she'll have thirty children in a room. This, however, did not bother her a bit, because she has found out that six-year-olds will help the four-year-olds and the four-year-olds will imitate the five-year-olds, and the five-year-olds will imitate the six-year-olds. She plans to take a great many of the materials that Montessori has developed into that school, but she will not be demanding that her students go through the use of these materials in a highly fixed way. She will prepare the environment, focus on the child's skills, and on his interests.

She plans to do another thing. She plans to have no group of children passing from one grade to the next. She wants to have the children start to school on the day after their fourth birthday. Starting becomes defined as a privilege: the child will then get to go to school. Children may be expected to spend different periods of time in this first room of three grade levels. Some may stay but a little over two years. Some might stay three years, and some four years. The given child 'flies up' to the next level, or room, individually at that point during the year when he has already got to doing things beyond the basic level of the next room. I find this fascinating. In this school, the circumstances will be arranged so that the child can, as it were, walk away from the boring blocks or knock down the too difficult ones with impunity.

To come back to my opening episode, teaching is highly important. But what we need to do is to arrange the circumstances so that they will interest children, and to select those environmental circumstances for the prepared environment that will pull children along in the development of those abilities, those motives, and those standards which are required for full participation in our highly technological society. Then we need to get out of their way while they go about the business of learning.

# SCHOOL STYLE: PICTURES OF PLACES WHERE YOUNG CHILDREN CAN LEARN

John Holt
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One of the stories I tell is about a little boy whom I call Danny. His father was a very close friend of mine. I used to go over there quite often and I've always been interested in little children and was very much interested in this one. At some point I took over a set of cuisenaire rods for him to play with. You know what they look like: little colored wooden sticks about the size of your little finger there, a square centimeter in cross section, and in lengths from one to ten centimeters, each length a different color. Here he had about 350 of these pieces of brightly colored wood and he looked like a miser going through his gold coins, you know. He was going as if scooping up coins and letting them run through his fingers. Well, his father and I got to thinking after a while that we would set up a little model for Danny to imitate. We were smarter than we had once been about instruction. We weren't going to try to tell him to do something, but we did think, well if we start doing some little kind of a thing with these sticks, Danny will imitate us. So we made a little structure on the floor, and I'll never forget it--this little boy sat there looking at us and then at our structure for a while; then he walked over with a perfectly impassive face and BAM! he knocked the sticks into the corner of the room. It took us a while to find out what was going on.

One of the things I've found in working with young children is that practically anything can be the raw materials of a game; that is, anything where a little child does something and then you do something, then he does something and you do something, and he does something. Anything like this is the greatest fun for little kids, and my own feeling about what makes this such fun is that they are making things happen; in particular they are making this giant person do something. In other words, they're not just objects; they are subjects.

It has seemed to me as I've observed young children that one of their strongest drives is not, strictly speaking, biological at all. I'm profoundly convinced that a fundamental drive, in human beings, at least, is to acquire some sense of one's own dignity, competence and worth. I think children begin to feel this very early in life, and I think this drive motivates and directs their behavior as much as anything else, any biological drives that are within them. I guess you can say that if a child is so hungry that he's feeling terrible pains in his tummy, this has to be gotten out of the way before anything else can happen, but I think it's a mistake to assign a greater priority even to the drive of hunger than to the drive for mastery or sense of competence or whatever we call it. To put it another way, I think that during most of the child's waking hours he does not spend his time satisfying the drives--hunger and so forth. Most of the time he is working on his sense of his own dignity--his competence and his worth. This is the center--the center of what?--I can hardly call it his consciousness because I don't think he thinks of it in any such term.

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I'm concerned to see schools become the sorts of places in which may happen the kinds of things that Professor Hunt is talking about, that is, schools in which children can make things happen, in which they can make some choices, in which people will give them beginnings and get out of their way. And I'd like here to call your attention to an article that was written a year or year-and-a-half ago by Professor David Hawkins, who, as some of you may know, has been very much concerned with teaching (and teaching is probably the wrong word), with the science learning of young children. He wrote an article in the ESI quarterly; I've quoted a great deal out of it in my newest book because it says so beautifully what I think school should be and particularly what the function of teachers, what the function of adults, in schools should be. The article is called, "Messing about with Science." I won't try to summarize it; I will say this--that he says that the primary function of the adult in the school environment is to provide children with what he called "good beginnings" from which they then can move in a great many different directions.

Now, in his case, the "good beginnings" were various pieces of scientific apparatus. What he described as good beginnings were pendula. Because of these pendula David began seeing the importance of the good beginning. His original plan with this particular class had been to put some pendula in the classroom and let the kids play around with them awhile and then begin to explain and analyze and ask questions. And for one reason or another he decided not to do that all of a sudden. He just thought he'd let the kids fool around with the pendula a little longer, and this fooling around, this messing around period became two or three weeks long; and the children began to discover, to experiment, to do things with pendula, that he had never thought of doing. In fact they began to develop some phenomena which he later found physicists, professors of physics, were unable to explain in terms of classical mechanics. They began to do some things like coupling two pendula together and getting the most peculiar looking kind of motions out of them.

There's the beginning of my picture of school--a place in which people who know more about the world and about the culture than the children can introduce into their environment beginnings, beginnings which allow children to make choices and from which they can begin to move in a great many directions.

Schools of the sort I envisage--at least moving in the directions I envisage--are operating in Britain. There was a series of articles quite recently in the New Republic by Joseph Featherstone, which I think would be the first large-scale publicity these schools have had in this country; I happen to know them because some friends of mine and I have been quite close to them for a number of years now because they seem to us to have gone much further than any large-scale system of public schools has gone in the kinds of directions I am talking about.

Most of these radical new schools--call them what you like--are infant schools, which means that they have children of five, six and seven in them. This revolution (you might call it) in learning has only begun to filter up into the junior schools (ages eight, nine, ten and eleven), though it is beginning to move into them. But the "revolution" is most widespread in the infant schools. What you have here are forty children in the classroom. Now this ratio of teachers to students is fixed by law; I mention it because when I talk about schools in which children are free to pursue their own interests and choose for themselves among a wide variety of materials and activities, people all say, "Well, that's fine if you have very small classes, but you can't do it if you have very large ones." My own feeling and the feeling of most of the people that I know is that, on the contrary, it's only when you have a very small class that you can maintain even the illusion of driving all the children along the same path like herding sheep down a road. With a class of twenty you can perhaps maintain the illusion--at least some of the time--that you are really in charge of everything that's going on, that all the learning is coming from you, that you're directing and overseeing and judging and analyzing. When you get forty, it's impossible. When you have very large classes you must abandon, however hard it may be, the idea that you can know everything, control everything, manage everything, start everything. You have got to let the children make some choices, do things on their own.

Well, here are these classrooms, and the ordinary British county school system is not very rich. England has some quite attractive new school buildings, but a great many of the best schools that I saw were in very ordinary kinds of school buildings--in some cases very unsatisfactory buildings that hadn't originally been built for schools at all. On the whole, the classrooms were crowded. But upon entering the room the picture you get is of a room divided up into a number of activity sections. You will have a reading corner, usually one or two comfortable chairs there. By the way, most of the people that I know who work with young children in the schools think that it's foolish to feel you have to have a chair for every child in a classroom. Little kids don't, in the normal course of life, spend much time sitting in chairs (it is not a natural place for a small child to go). And increasingly, I think, the British are beginning to get away from the notion there has to be one desk and one chair for each child. By reducing the amount of furniture in the room, they increase the amount of room for other things to go on. Along with a reading corner with magazines, books, a couple of comfortable chairs, you will also have another section, usually close to it, which is a sort of writing section in which children can write compositions or stories; and a lot of these stories will be posted up on the walls. If the children are very young, they will draw pictures and tell a story to imitate the older kids who are writing.

A great many of the things I am describing now are being done in our own elementary classrooms. If the children are young, they may dictate a story to a teacher and the teacher will write it down and put it up on the board. Children in British schools, on the whole (at least in the British schools that I've seen in this county), are more imaginative than in most of the schools I know about in the range of things that they are able to write about or the length, extent, complexity of the writing that they do. It's not at all uncommon for a kid in one of these schools to pick something that he's quite interested in and write a little booklet about it, with illustrations drawn by himself or cut out of a magazine or newspaper, and with a little binding which he makes; the thing will be put up on the wall and he's proud to have put it there, and the other children go up and read it, and this booklet then provides a kind of competence model for the other children.

Now if we look at competence models, we know that if the complexity is too great, the child tends to reject the competence model (if the model is too difficult he just knocks it into the corner). This knowledge should suggest to us that children can teach children, and we are beginning to find in schools that children are often the best instructors of other children. We have not gone anywhere near as far as we might in making use of this. But it seems to be a fact. I've read of a number of places in which, say, fifth graders or sixth graders will work with first or second graders on reading, and they are often exceedingly effective teachers even when they themselves are having reading difficulties. In fact it has been found in some cities, I believe, that when fifth or sixth graders who had a lot of problems with reading go down and begin working with first graders, they are very effective teachers, and also their own reading begins to improve. I think one of the reasons why children are such effective teachers of other children is not only that they tend to speak the same language and have, so to speak, been through the same experiences and know some of what the difficulties are, but that they are a more accessible competence model. We adults do things so well and we seem so hopelessly removed from children that there seems almost no use in trying to imitate us. I think we forget how great this age gap seems to be.[1]

Let me go back to the British schools. They will have a wide variety of mathematics and science materials. In fact, one of the things that strikes me about these schools is the extraordinary richness of the materials which they put before the children, really far beyond anything that I've seen in an American classroom. In fact, I should say one of the things I often say to the Montessori people I know is that I wish they would expand their ideas of what can go into classrooms, get past the notion that unless Madame Montessori invented a piece of material, it doesn't belong in the classroom. In the mathematics section, you'll have cuisenaire rods, you'll have a lot of materials developed by a British mathematician named Dienes. There'll be geometrical puzzles and various kinds of number things, probably an abacus, counters, and so forth. They have developed some very ingenious little transparent adding machines which children can actually crank and whose inner works the kids can actually see; they'll have little calculators too. And in the science section you'll have pendula and balances, springs, perhaps a big tank with water in it and various liquid measures and squeeze bottles and plastic tubing. They will have clear plastic tubing stoppered at either end with, very often, two different kinds of liquid--water or glycerin--and children turn these upside down and watch the way the liquids behave. Or they'll have one with, say, glycerin and a lot of gravel, and they'll watch the gravel falling down the tube. And there'll be batteries and flashlights, and a little cookstove with some scales. And little girls like to bring in stuff from home and bake cookies; and, if they're edible, people eat them and if they're not--well, they learn something from that. Maps, globes.

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[1] I think of another story. A friend of mine has a little daughter--about two maybe, or a year and a half--and she had one of these little whistles with a few holes to stop up with your fingers. It was very elementary, a little plastic flute kind of thing, and she used to pipe away happily on this. And one day her father picked up this little thing and looked at it and put his fingers all over the holes and began to experiment. Pretty soon he was playing a little bit of a tune. When he gave it back to the child, she threw it in the corner of her playpen. And when I talked to him she hadn't picked it up since.

They're very ingenious in their use of tape recorders. It is quite common for a teacher, for example, to take a book and dictate the story on a tape so that then a number of children can sit with earphones looking at the book and hearing it read aloud. In other words, you have here a kind of mechanical equivalent of the adult reading to the child sitting on his knee. Such a use of a tape recorder helps a child pick up connections between the written and spoken word. Or sometimes the children will dictate stories of their own and they can hear them back. We're just beginning to discover the kinds of things that can be done with tape.

They usually have a little box filled with old costumes, clothes, hats that ladies have turned in, you know. And they are beginning to discover that this kind of free drama may be a much more important activity in school for young children than they had suspected. William Hull started in the basement of his house in Cambridge a couple of years ago a little nursery school, and put a great many materials in the room with the expectation that children would spend most of their time working with and using the materials--rather as if the child was an infant scientist. He began to discover--really very much to his surprise--that a great deal of the time these children were carrying on a kind of improvised drama. I remember asking him if this meant that they were playing house or something like that, and he said, "No, no." He said, "In most of these games the children take on roles of animals, and sometimes one will be a bear or a tiger and sometimes one will be a rabbit."

British children in the schools I am describing are using drama as a way of exploring the possibilities for various kinds of human relationships--for a kind of role-playing, if you want to call it that. One may illustrate the sorts of possibilities which lie in this kind of drama, in fact, and which may lie in all kinds of children's fantasies. (I should say I take children's fantasy and play very seriously, and I think it needs to be given more scope than it gets.) The student in this illustration--the girl--was the four-year-old daughter of a man who was divorced a couple of years ago--the girl lived with her father. At the school, in almost all of these animal games, she played the same role over and over and over again, month after month after month. Her role was to play the part of an animal with a hurt leg, who couldn't walk. As part of the game this animal had to be taken care of; if the animals were going somewhere, some way had to be found to help the little animal get there. And the other "animals" accepted this perfectly well. Nobody said, "We're tired of you and your hurt leg." They were willing to incorporate the hurt leg into the drama. The girl was, I think, playing out, acting out, her need to be taken care of, but it seems very significant that this disability which she had assigned to herself was not a permanent one. The hurt leg was never a missing leg. There was never any indication that she wasn't going to get well sometime. Her condition was a temporary condition. I see in this episode the glimmerings of a confirmation of the idea that, given a great deal of freedom from pressure and tension, disturbed children may be their own best psychiatrists. I think we may be able to find theoretical underpinnings for this hunch.[1] And perhaps children have ways of using fantasy to do what, for adults, the analyst tries to do--ways of reliving and reworking and eventually getting hold of and being able to deal with experiences that were initially too much for them.

In the transformed British schools, there will be a corner for free drama activities; here will be costumes and props and "things" which they can put on and use. There'll be carpenter's benches with real tools; this makes many American school teachers' faces blanch--real hammers, saws, chisels?--Yes, yes, yes, here they are; it's saw and hammer away. They use the hallways usually for the noisier pounding and acting.

British schools have a great deal of pottery; they have their easels and various kinds of drawing equipment and so forth.

And by and large, except for periods like Physical Education and Music which require that everybody be in a certain place at a certain time, children in the new infant schools will come in and decide what they're going to do during the day. The day is an integrated day, one not divided into class periods. The schools vary considerably in the amount of control and supervision that they have over these activities. In some rather nervous or, let me say, more nervous schools, there may be a requirement that each child must spend a certain amount of time on arithmetic and a certain amount on reading and a certain amount on writing. In other schools the requirement may be one that you have to fill each week. On the other hand, there are schools in which no such requirements are laid down at all. The results seem to be about as good in the more flexible ones as in the less flexible ones.

On the other hand, I believe that it is very important that we realize that one can't push teachers further in the direction of non-direction, let's say, than they are willing to go. I did see one school there which had adopted the idea of the integrated day, in which theoretically the children were not made to study subjects in periods. Yet, the head of this particular school was very uneasy about the situation. I don't mean to say that he had been compelled to adopt an integrated day against his will. It wasn't that.

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[1] There may be very real reasons, so to speak, why children may be their own best therapists. I know something about the experiences of schools like, say, Summerhill, where children come who have been badly beaten and defeated in more conventional schools. As a matter of fact, one of my own fifth-grade students, a student who at ten years seemed to me on the verge of a complete breakdown, went about two years later to Summerhill; like many children he spent a year sitting under the trees doing practically nothing, healing his wounds by some process unknown to me, and then began to get back into the stream of learning and doing and acting.

The infant school revolution was a voluntary kind of revolution. There are still schools in this county which are as rigid as they ever were. Changes can only be made if the heads and the teachers feel like making them. The head I have mentioned and his staff were verbally convinced that the integrated day would be a good thing; and yet they hadn't really gone that far in their hearts. They were uneasy. They were afraid that the children might not be learning or might not be learning the right things. The result of their fear was very interesting to see. I went into one classroom, and here was a nice middle-aged lady who was trying her best to do a free kind of program and, yet, was very uneasy about it. During the time I was in the class (an hour and a half or more), there was always a line of children leading up to this lady and they'd come up holding up a little piece of paper and saying, "Is this all right? Is this all right? See what I've done." And she'd say, "Yes, that's very nice." And then the next child would come up and say, "Look, look, I've just done so and so; is that all right?" And she'd say, "Oh, that's wonderful, dear." And the child would go back. You see the point; you can't push teachers further than they are really ready to go, and that's why I'm skeptical of any sort of drip down, superimposed revolution in education. I don't think any kind of innovation, least of all the kind I'm concerned about, can be imposed by fiat. It must evolve in the local situation.

In the county school systems, there was what the Ministry calls an advisory staff--a group of people who work for the county authority, who travel around to schools, who talk to whatever teachers want to talk to them. If one doesn't want to talk to the advisory staff, one doesn't have to. The advisory staff suggests new ways of doing things; it makes available new materials; it will listen sympathetically to teachers telling about the problems they've had; it will hold workshops and just bull sessions and so forth where teachers who are doing new things can compare notes and reinforce each other. This has all been done on a local, fairly spontaneous basis: "Here are the ideas," "Here are the materials," "Use them if you like," "Call on us for help if you want to, but if you don't want to, don't." The relationship between the county advisory staff and the school people describes the proper relationship between children in the classroom and teachers. The teachers--I wish we could find another word; I don't know what it would be--the older people, the more experienced, bring into this environment as much as they have. No two people will bring the same things.

There's a great deal more that can be said about what elementary school might be but I think you have my picture. I say elementary school, but I tend to feel the pattern of education I have described is the right one at all levels. I don't really believe in what we call the curriculum. I don't believe in the notion of a body of knowledge which has got to be injected into children's heads. It is not our business to figure out what we think children ought to know and to figure out ways of conning or seducing them--or bribing or bullying them--into learning it.

The first elementary school that I taught in was a school (some of you perhaps know this from my book, if you've read it) which deeply and sincerely believed that it was child-centered and kindly and supportive, and the children in this school were about as anxious and fearful of failure as any children I've ever known because their wark was so tangled up with these adult expectations of them. They were so terribly conscious of what these nice teachers (women, mostly, but not all) wanted them to do. What we have got to try to do is to make school what these "child-centered" teachers couldn't make it--a "window on the world." We've got to try to get in as much as we can of what seems to us best and most stimulating in our culture, and I personally would like to see much more of the arts in our schoolroom than gets in, and I should add that even from the point of view of the needs of science or demands of technology, we make a mistake in underplaying the arts as much as we do. The kind of imagination that makes great scientists or great innovators in any field of human life is perhaps best stimulated among young children or children of any age through the arts. In making a school as I envisage it we create an environment such as I have described.

We make an environment made up of people. We let people come into our schools and classrooms who are not, strictly speaking, teachers. Geologists, botanists, policemen, firemen, politicians, newspaper editors--anybody who's got something to say. As children get old enough so that they can move freely around their communities, they would have opportunities to get outside of the school building. They would do more than go on excursions to this place or that, led by a teacher. A twelve-year-old, for example, who on his own time can travel all over my hometown of Boston, ought to be able to look at something at the library or go to the Museum of Science or find out something about the local newspaper, if he wants to. We need to find out ways, in other words, of lowering the walls between the school and the world.

# IMAGES OF MAN AND THE PERSUASIVE STYLE: WRITING IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Einstein is said to have said, when the atom bomb was dropped twenty-five years ago, that everything had changed with that terrible act except the mind of man. That is going to be the text for my remarks this morning. Twenty-five years after his remark, consider what has changed in our profession. The teaching of what is generally called 'English' has probably changed least of all academic disciplines. It is probably the most conservative subject in the curriculum; it looks that way to me, anyway. We have gotten used to the threat of the atom bomb and even to the pressures of technological advance, and the need for change may perhaps not seem as pressing to some of you as it does to me. However, the evidence of the need is on our college campuses, in our high schools and our elementary schools. We recently have had an SDS convention at the University of Michigan where I had opportunities to talk to some of the leaders--educational reformers, primarily. I have talked to Carl Ogelsby, and I think that he would be in many ways the proper person to address this group. What those people want is an educational reform. They want a change in the University's image of what it is trying to do with its students and what its product is; they want the whole idea of "product" dropped, as a matter of fact. The conflict between the students and university, I think, goes back earlier into the schools; it is partly derived from their sense that what has been taught has so often been irrelevant: lies about the world, but not so much lies, I think, as irrelevant pictures and ancient images. In the field of English and the teaching of writing, the failure has been almost complete.

I'd like to support that statement a bit--the feeling that English is an irrelevant subject: students sit through English classes which have no carryover to their other classes; teachers grade papers and put marks on them, pass them back, go through units of study in such matters as grammar and diction and do what they have always done and neither teacher nor student does what is relevant. What happens in the grade schools in so-called English classes or whatever they are labeled is a preview for what happens in colleges: the lack of relevancy in what is studied is at the center of what the college students are revolting against. This wrong or irrelevant sort of language teaching and writing teaching is, I think, based upon a mistaken or outdated or irrelevant image of the world. I think we're going to have to change quickly; as my friend Kenneth Boulding is fond of saying, "We're facing a generation brought up on demand feeding, and they're still demanding in college." The crisis is there; and I think it reaches back to the elementary school.

Most of what goes under the name of English-teaching or the teaching of writing is primarily the teaching of a rhetoric based in large part on a classical image of man, most simply, I suppose, on

Aristotle's idea of man as a rational animal or potentially so. His idea of the disciplines of logic and rhetoric develops from this image of man--logic being the mode of discourse of scientists; rhetoric being the mode of discourse of scientists and other wise men to men who aren't quite so reasonable and who have to be swayed by extra means. (Rhetoric thus conventionally becomes the sugar coating on the pill.) Logic, the argument of the educated man; rhetoric, the usually necessary mode of persuasion, a mode of aggression, a mode of battle, traditionally. Rhetoricians in the Greco-Roman world used all of their authority, the authority of their skills of speech, to shape, move and direct the policy of their society; and they were "taught" authority, especially in late classical times, taught the authoritative statements--"the best that has been thought and said." By finding the authority--that is, the truth--in the classics, the ancient and medieval speaker was empowered to deal with a problem or an enemy, defending the "truth" of his own case with quotations, illustrations, and support from the classics. Western culture developed a form of education known best to us as 'liberal education' based on the study of classics--the "great books" courses of classical and medieval times--and on a rhetoric which revolved around the study and reading of literature and the weaving of magnificent authorities into magnificent speeches. If one wishes to study the techniques of rhetoric proposed by Aristotle, all of the topics of invention, if one wishes to look at the classics as sort of the data book for ideas and invention, the best sort of book in this tradition is The Syntopicon from the University of Chicago. If you have to make a speech on love and you look up love in The Syntopicon you can weave in all of the impressive quotations from all of the authorities on love. By doing this, you convince everybody of your learning; you expose the "reasonable, true" ideas to people; and you just hope that by saying them in the right way, they'll be convincing. As Cicero has said, "Invention and the invention of arguments and techniques in rhetoric is the discovery of valid or seemingly valid arguments to render one's case plausible." In other words, classical rhetoric is an opposition rhetoric; it is basically aggressive. The most obvious place in which one will find it today is in the courtroom as it is used, say, in a battle between two lawyers, lawyers being the leading rhetoricians of our day. One can find it on TV: in the typical DA programs where lawyers oppose each other the ideal is represented well, the faith that the truth will out if two clever people oppose each other with their rhetoric and dialectic and "combat" each other with words. This image, the classical image of rhetoric and the teaching of writing, has been alive for almost two thousand years in the West; it is still the idea of rhetoric which is meaningful to most English teachers; that is why I say that rhetoric is a very conservative subject.

Having lost our faith in the rational animal once again (a loss of faith which comes upon us periodically in history) around a hundred years ago we evolved a new image of man--the dominant image for people outside of English today and even for some English teachers: the image of the driven, conditioned animal developed by Freud, Pavlov and the others. I'm going to oversimplify greatly here in my remarks (the stages of the development which I am tracing were more precisely and elegantly presented by Professor Hunt than I'll be able to do). In the new image of man, logic and reason now become mere surface rationalization, and their study becomes increasingly irrelevant. People outside the discipline of English (and more and more within it) lost faith in the older rhetoric based on logic, reason, and authority; yet they had very little with which to replace it. Their new art of persuasion, insofar as they evolved one in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, was a rhetoric of many sorts: a rhetoric of propaganda, advertising and brain-washing in its worst aspects; a rhetoric of control, a much subtler form of control but still a basically aggressive rhetoric; a new rhetoric based on my doing something to you. A professor of mine once asserted that that is all rhetoric is--learning to do things to other people with language or learning to prevent other people from doing things to you with language. That is what the tradition had been reduced to: its essential, aggressive core.

This new sort of rhetoric based on the forms of controlling people has led to good and bad things: consider the relationship between Pavlov and Skinner and programmed instruction. I've seen some very nice forms of programmed instruction created by Don Smith and others at Michigan; I've seen some terribly threatening forms of it created by other people. I think that behavioral psychology, the stimulus-response model led to a sort of rhetoric for persuading people. The idea of 'invention' in this sort of rhetoric is that one isolates the conditioning factor and then uses that to produce the sort of behavior that one wants.

I want to suggest that there is an image of man beyond those which I've discussed. I think I've heard a lot about it this morning, more than I'd anticipated I would before I came. The third image of man which I wish to discuss comes to me most clearly in the work of Carl Rogers, the psychotherapist. Others of you have gotten ideas similar to Rogers' ideas elsewhere. He speaks of non-directive therapy. He speaks of a new definition of man, not of man as a rational, reasonable animal or potentially so; not necessarily of man as a driven, conditioned creature but of man as a threatened creature: a person acts in the way he acts because of a series of threats he confronts and because he has to learn to deal with the threats of other people around him. According to this view, institutions are basically coercive; rightly or wrongly, they are based on aggression and force, and our behavior is a matter of learning strategies to handle aggression and force; the power that one has is proportionate to the degree of threat that he can produce over another person or institution.

This image is the pervasive image according to which we operate in dealing with society. We surely use it when we create a foreign policy which is based on the idea of how much threat can we bring to bear on a situation. Given this world of threat, Rogers says, can we develop a way of really communicating with people? Can we develop a new rhetoric which takes the logic of threat into consideration, especially now that our coercive power is so tremendous and widespread? If only a few people have the capacity to threaten and the power to coerce in their hands, threatenings and power can order our social world, I suppose. But when everybody has the capacity to threaten or the 'power' in his hands, we have to find a new way to regulate our world. As a footnote I want to say that the existence of a universal capacity to threaten seems to me to be the message of what happened in the Detroit riots a few weeks ago. People in Detroit said, "Look, we've got guns, too; let's find another way to handle this; I can shoot just as much as you can shoot." Psychologically, what was happening in Detroit was that men said, "If you're going to use coercive power, we've got coercive power; let's find another answer."

Rogers is one of the few who's looking for another answer. I wish now to suggest that what we need is a rhetoric of threat reduction, not a rhetoric of ng

As Rogers points out, one of the first things one can do to create threat is to *evaluate* people. This is what Hunt was talking about earlier: "token reward" systems and putting the stars on student's papers. Even if we just say good things about people and not bad, even if we *just reward* and not punish, we're still producing threat. It doesn't take very long for a student to learn that not getting the stars is the same as getting the axe.

The rhetoric of threat-reduction is not authoritarian. One doesn't look for all sorts of ways to coerce others with one's authority. Above all, the rhetoric which we seek is non-manipulative. One of the most threat-producing things of all is the sense that "I'm being manipulated; what do you want me to do now?" Children learn this very early. They know the game and they learn the strategies for surviving.

We sense manipulation and we feel threatened.

Now in place of manipulation, Rogers has suggested something called Rogerian debate. It is a form of debate which is, I think, the only new form since classical times--and it works according to a very different psychology than does classical debate. Its aim is not to control, but to communicate. Communication becomes not a way of getting at the truth, not a way of getting you to act in a certain way, but it becomes an end in itself: communication itself is the goal. It is not a tool for anything else, but is itself therapeutic. As Rogers says, when communication occurs, it is therapeutic within the person and between people. Rogerian debate is an attempt to set up the situation, to set up the environment, in which communication can occur.

The idea is of course not entirely new to people in rhetoric and to English teachers. From Aristotle's time we have had the idea that rhetoric is based, in part, on identification and on the building of community. Rogerian debate works through a progression in discussion--a kind of dialectic--usually between people who feel very strongly opposed to each other. One person tries to restate the other's point of view: this is the initial point: an attempt is made to restate another person's thinking, to see another person's problems until he's satisfied, until he says, "Yes, you stated my point thoroughly." The next step is an attempt to show the area of validity in what 'you' say, the area where 'I' find agreement, where I believe you're right. The area of opposition is left aside.

The faith which informs this particular theory--all theories have one little place where faith comes in--is the faith that, when you work at understanding another person's ideas, the other person will take a chance and begin to behave in the same way: he'll begin to try to communicate with you. He might begin by trying to state your point of view and trying to see the area of validity in it.

From this perspective, rhetoric becomes a sort of dialectic to light up one's own blind spots; it is not aggression but a two-way thing, an awareness of another person's frame and picture.

It would be a great advance if education were thought of as getting children interested in each other's problems and each other's solutions to their problems. Rhetoric is necessary because of the diversity of our various images of the world--the oftentimes threatening diversity.

The new rhetoric, necessary because of the diversity of our images, has as its goal communication: learning to see other people's problems and solutions.

The different images of man or different kinds of rhetoric of which I speak are not mutually exclusive (I've artificially separated them for the purposes of discussing them), but one could make an interesting study of when one or another image is dominant at different points in history; there may well be a relation between[1] the stability of the world and the form of persuasion which people use.

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[1] It was Richard Young who first suggested to me that the emphasis in rhetoric shifts from authoritative presentation to dialectic or relativistic presentation as man's faith in a stable world wanes. The point is discussed in Wilbur Samuel Howell, *Logic and Rhetoric in England, 1500-1700* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1961). In discussing the rhetorical theories of Ramon Lull and Peter Ramus, Howell writes (p. 9):

> Both of these reformers were articulating misgivings which the society around them shared, and both were seeking to bring learning into a closer relation with the practical needs which it exists to satisfy. So it always is. A theory of communication is an organic part of a culture. As the culture changes, so will the theory change.

Howell cites the concomitant rise of science, the middle class, and Protestantism as forces which disrupted the medieval world and led to several new rhetorics, particularly those of the Ramists, the Neo-Ciceronians, the Systematists, and the Port-Royalists. He associates with the latter Bacon's implied new rhetoric in *The Advancement of Learning*. A similar tracing of the parallel between cultural changes and changes in rhetorical theory can be found in Donald Lemen Clark, *Rhetoric in Greco-Roman Education* (New York: Columbia, 1957).

Also see Henry W. Johnstone, Jr., "A New Theory of Philosophical Argumentation" in Johnstone and Natanson, eds., *Philosophy, Rhetoric, and Argumentation* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1965). Johnstone discusses the relation of absolute and relative types of philosophical argumentation to times of social stability and social upheaval, respectively.

Let us take up the question of "teaching writing" at this point, giving our topic this historical perspective. How then can we teach writing at the elementary level? By writing here, I don't mean the transferring of symbols from sound to writing; I am not talking about handwriting, penmanship, or reading: these things are done in very interesting ways in the schools and, I think, done fairly well. Children generally seem to learn to handle a pencil and to read in our culture; they don't seem sometimes to *want to learn to read* but they learn. These basic skills seem to me not to be the center of our problem. (Those of you who are specialists in this reading and handwriting will know of a lot more problems than I do, but I don't want to talk about them now). Writing, as I use the word here, means the student's putting down on paper words which give us his picture of the world; we could extend our concern to all communication--speaking, drawing pictures, and so forth. Writing is a matter of a person's setting forth what he wants other people to understand about himself and his view of the world.

The most interesting distinction, the most interesting theoretical point made in linguistics in recent years has been the distinction between surface and deep grammar--a very rich distinction, related, in part to the old distinction between the *grammatical* subject or object of a sentence and its *logical* subject or object: it involves the assumption that there are surface categories, such as the subject of a clause, and deeper categories--agents, instruments, locations, etc.--categories underlying the surface categories. Recently in some of our own work in tagmemic theory, and in the work of Charles Fillmore at Ohio State, who has worked out what he calls a modern "case theory," we have come to learn a lot more about the operation of the deep categories underlying the surface structures of language; we have learned how these deep categories are 'controlled' in the surface structure of the language by devices (focus devices Kenneth Pike often calls them) which process an underlying proposition. If you create a proposition in which there is an agent and an action, a goal, a time, and a place--given this kind of proposition--many sorts of sentences can be written. We have a sentence like, "John walked to the store to get his mother some butter," in which the agent is the subject, the one who did the walking. We can bring many other things up into the subject position: we can say, "The store is the place where John went to get the butter,"--the location becomes the subject. We can say, "His mother was the person that John got the butter for." "Butter was the thing that John went to the store to get." These are all obvious manipulations using the verb "be" and various grammatical categories after it.

Again, consider: "John opened the door with the key;" "The door opened;" "The key opened the door;" "The door was opened by John;" and so forth, all different surface realizations of a single set of underlying, or 'deep' categories. And these deep categories, as I think Fillmore more than anybody else is pointing out, are the true "universals of language."

The categories allow us to get from one language to another. These "categories" that he calls "cases" are the universals which permit a person speaking in Thai or Burmese, the languages with which I work, to learn English by learning how these categories are manifested in English. A certain feature of a Burmese proposition might be manifested in English as a subject, a modifier of the subject, or as part of the verb. For instance, given the English sentence, "The key opened the door," there is no way of putting the agent into the clause; one cannot say, "The key opened the door by John." One has to use two sentences or embed sentences or use some such device. In other languages, Philippine languages for instance, there are common grammatical devices which allow for one's saying the equivalent of, "The key opened the door by John." Although languages differ as to their surface realizations of the deep categories, the categories themselves are probably universal.

At the level of the 'paragraph,' we find something quite similar to this idea of an underlying deep structure, an underlying logical structure which can be represented in a sequence of sentences in what I shall call "discursive plots." Anthropologists have known for a long time about narrative plots which seem to be universal; and V. Propp, Stith Thompson and others have collected folk tales displaying a similar pattern of action from around the world: we can find analogies to the archetypal plots of our own cowboy movies in the plots of stories from India and from other countries. There seem to be some basic underlying 'plots' for narratives which are fairly universal. And there are probably other plots which are unique to a culture or an area.

At Michigan, a few years ago, we asked, "Are there some basic underlying plots for expository discourse?" We're still working on the problem. The things that traditionally were called classification, contrast, illustration, etc. seem to be the underlying logical or rhetorical structures; they can be represented by a series of possible strategic linguistic ploys in sequences of sentences.

We have also asked, "Are these discursive plots for organizing underlying logical or cognitive patterns psychologically real?" The answer seems to be yes. At Michigan we set up tests first to see if these plots were the underlying structure of paragraphs. We took all paragraph indentations out of passages, and we asked our subjects to mark the places where paragraphs began; we found very high agreement among subjects. (The data has been published in the reports of the Center for Research on Language and Language Behavior at the University of Michigan.) Then everybody said, "Well, of course, they can tell by the meanings of the words in the passage. What you are describing is a semantic phenomenon." I felt very strongly at that point that what we were describing was a grammatical phenomenon, too. Just as the underlying categories in a sentence are marked by certain grammatical markers in English (order, endings, etc.), so also the "plots" are marked by grammatical markers; we took out all the content words from the passages and we substituted nonsense words--a good old-fashioned Friesian experiment--and did the same experiments again. We found almost the same results--that the students identified the paragraphs without knowing what in the world the paragraphs were about. We asked them to guess what the paragraphs were about, and we got a wide variety of answers. They seem to have relied on certain grammatical cues which suggested what kinds of conceptual "plotting" of sequences of sentences was implicit. We've now begun to isolate these cues.[1]

There are many ways in which a conceptual or logical structure can be 'plotted' and ultimately represented in sentences just as an underlying proposition can have many, many sentences which are representations or manifestations of it. The 'plots' represent conventional images and expectations we have about the way in which the logic of our encounter with the world can be represented: they vary somewhat from country to country; they also display some likenesses from country to country and language to language. They are our means of 'processing' experience.

I think learning to manipulate these discursive plots is something which could happen in the elementary school. One would not have to be taught them, one could learn them. I like, especially, Holt's idea of creative drama as a way of learning the paradigm narrative-dramatic plots, I think. And I had the thought, as I was listening to Mr. Holt, "How do you learn expository plots? What's the expository parallel to the child's created drama?" And it seemed to me that the equivalent in the realm of the discursive to what creative drama is in the realm of the fictive-narrative is pre-reporting: a semi-journalistic situation, where children consider reporting about an event to others and decide as a group how the event is to be reported to a group of other people. The place where I learned to write, insofar as I learned to write in school, was in the journalism laboratory and in newspaper work--not in an English class. I wasn't taught journalistic rhetoric except the old heuristic of journalism, who, why, where, when, etc.; but I learned it: I learned how to write a paragraph, how to lead readers--I had to do it over and over again and I had people my own age who read what I wrote and they would say, "That was lousy," and "I don't get this." Nobody on the faculty did anything about my newspaper writing; nobody did for that writing what most English teachers do with writing ninety percent of the time, i. e. editing.

I want to suggest that editing, even in the simplest form where the instructor re-writes sentences between the lines (which is the editing of teachers who are moving away from the practice of editing), was missing from the writing experience which taught me to write. I want to suggest that editing should be dropped from the schools. The teacher as authoritarian evaluator is inconsistent with the non-competitive, non-threatening, relativistic image of rhetoric that I have been trying to propose as a model. To evaluate a student's behavior in an authoritarian way is to produce a threat. Ultimately, it is to produce what is the most widespread phenomenon of all among writing students, the painful hang-up about writing anything at all. Writing is just too scary. It is mysterious: "Somehow when I write something down, I think I know what I'm doing but I get back an evaluation which I don't understand, which doesn't seem to be responding to what I thought I was saying, but to something that seems to me irrelevant." What does the editing matter? It gets in the way; to return to linguistic terminology, it is marking surface structure.

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[1] Among these cues are lexical transitions (e. g., therefore, indeed, etc.), consistency of anaphoric relationships, verb forms (expanded versus simple verb forms), inversion of syntactic order, dummy subject markers (e. g., there, it), grammatical parallelism, etc. Paragraph markers seem to function in clusters; seldom does a single cue (except indentation) mark a paragraph. Furthermore, different rhetorical plots seem to be marked by different formal cues.

Currently I am attempting to derive all paragraph plots from underlying question-answer syntagmemes plus conjoining rules. An explanation of our competence to distinguish an answer to a question from a non-answer (e. g., What is John doing? *She was here. He's singing.) and to recognize proper conjoining (John cooked the rice. The rice cooked. *John and the rice cooked.) seems sufficient to explain most sequencing rules.

If the instructor marks only the surface phenomena and thinks that he is *just marking the surface*, doing a commendable job of trying to polish up the student for society, he should also be aware that he is evaluating, in a very deep sense, the student's image of the world. As a matter of fact, the student's particular image of the world is usually considered irrelevant to the goals of English class. The result is a defensiveness, a resentment and learning to write "what the teacher wants," a writing which has no relation to what the student needs to say or feels he wants to say. I find such a concern for surface grammar and surface editing widespread even in the best and most modern of schools, with no exceptions that I can think of. The teacher justifies his surface concerns by elevating a body of theory which he calls 'grammar'. He, as it were, indirectly says to the child, "We have this serious thing called grammar; if you learn this you, too, can be a surface editor. You'll know the rules." Hence teachers spend time justifying surface editing by teaching what is thought to be its theory: grammar, be it traditional, structural, transformational, tagmemic, or whatever. The movement in this country is toward more and more complex grammar books no matter what their educational value in the schools. We are now getting a series of programmed grammars all the way down to the first grade, so that by the time the student gets through, he'll know 'grammar'. The present study of grammar should be seen for what it is, however: an attempt by the teacher and the system to justify surface editing.

I do not wish to knock the teaching of grammar but only the illusion that it is relevant to learning to write. I would suggest that in the schools, maybe in the sixth grade, maybe in the Junior High School, maybe earlier, there should be a course set aside on the history and structure of the English language. The abstract study of how to describe the way a language works can be a fascinating subject for school children and an exciting subject for those few school teachers who decide really to become specialists in linguistics. Nothing in the study of grammar--the study of language description--has anything to do with writing courses, however. For the sake of both, the teaching of writing ought to be strictly divorced from the teaching of descriptions of the language. Just as the medieval doctor caused more disease than he cured, the present composition teacher and his course in grammar and editing, no matter which grammar, causes more disease than he cures. And I really believe that by about grade five kids cease to enjoy writing, mainly because of the medieval writing doctor.

Grammar is no problem for the native speaker; as Martin Joos has suggested, completeness is the problem. Like the beards and the beads and bare feet and other things which take care of themselves on the campus, grammar takes care of itself in the life of a native speaker. Although grammar is what people get excited about, the problem which bedevils students is not how the language is put together--the subject of grammar--not the machine or the code; they have a perfect intuitive understanding of this. The student's problem is communicating to somebody else as completely as he can his image of the world, and that is what Joos means by completeness. And it is on this capacity for completeness of communication that we ought to concentrate; the only way to get at completeness of communication is to create situations which allow teachers to drop their evaluative behavior in the classroom: primarily this means giving up grading.

Given the rhetorical stance of the present composition class, which requires the introduction of threat, and given the basis of present rhetoric, its teaching of the capacity to threaten, I am tempted to say at this point that the best thing we could do right now in the teaching of writing is stop and do nothing. At least then we might not be doing any harm. We are actively doing harm to students in schools with our writing courses now, tying students all up, taking nice fluent six-year-olds who can play spontaneously and poetically with language and making them into tied up eight-year-olds who hate to write and who think poems are for sissies. Given our plight, what can a teacher do?

First, we can help students to solve their own problems. We can encourage language play, which is just natural and lovely. My son, who hates English now, sits home and writes rock songs and plays them on his guitar. They are lovely. There is truth in the idea that Bob Dylan may be one of our best poets right now. The Beatles, Janis Ian with "Society's Child" and other lyric poets are producing the most relevant literature for our children. For young people in junior high school, writing a rock song would be a wonderful way to learn composition. You can begin composition teaching by encouraging students to play around with surface forms of language--the shifting of words and phrases in a free sort of way. One of the only ways in which the linguist as a linguist might really help the teacher is to describe ways of manipulating language and styles of processing underlying propositions and sequences of propositions. Some of his theoretical underpinning explaining what goes on and what can go on in language play might perhaps help the teacher become aware of all the possibilities of language play. That is probably one way that the linguist can really contribute something to the teacher of writing. It is not an awfully large contribution, but an important one, I think.

Second, we can suggest to students other images of the world, encouraging their exploration of them. And this is what I think Kenneth Pike, Richard Young, and a few others are trying to do in developing a new heuristic, a new art of invention. The heuristic has not yet been brought down to the grade school level, but I think that it could be. Pike's interest is in how you solve problems which involve getting inside an image of the world radically different from that of our own time and culture. I've confronted the question in work with Peace Corps trainees: "How do you learn how to behave in a completely foreign environment? What sort of tools do you have?" The question for the linguist is: "How do you work in the field?" Given a language that one doesn't understand, how does one write a grammar of it and learn to speak it competently? Pike, in the course of trying to make a set of tools for getting through to the image of the world of people radically different from us, has developed the idea that three perspectives are possible in looking at any given event or thing as one endeavors to perceive coherence in it: the perspective which looks for particles, that which looks for waves, and that which looks for fields. Pike's idea is that the three perspectives developed by modern physics, the particle, wave and field approaches, may suggest useful modes of approach to other phenomena, approaches which will allow us to see not only our own cultural frames but from those of other people or cultures. If I may use myself as an example: that I am a distinct, unique person I know, but my doctor sees me as a biological process. And other people see me as fulfilling a role in a society where a grid of dependencies interlock. In other words, I can see myself as a discrete, independent particle; as a dynamic sort of wave process going through history and time; or as a point of intersection in some sort of field structure. To understand me as a person, you have to know all three perspectives, none of which is false and none of which is completely true because each errs by leaving out something.

We can encourage students to practice a shifting of perspectives in working with language, a taking of new perspectives--looking at a number of different phenomena through different frames or as different people in the community, given their occupational concerns, would look. Consider a possible interviewing technique in the grade schools, for instance: we, and our elementary school students, can take out the tape recorders, talk to people about something that they are interested in, bring back the tapes and talk about what frames, visions, perspectives they have found.

In the study of literature we can get beyond the western perspective, and this is relevant to the training of teachers. The image that "culture" starts in Greece, moves to Rome, up Europe, across to England, and then across the ocean to us is the dominant academic image of the 'progress of culture'. This picture of history and literature is one of the most harmful things which we perpetuate in our schools, perhaps the source of most of our present trouble in Asia.

The literature used in the classes should perhaps not be the most familiar but the most strange: the radically alien perspective.

The third point I want to suggest is that, to teach writing, to teach the management of language in any form which the street does not teach, we must establish a classroom in which the students help each other. They should really take responsibility. They should not be given merely the illusion of responsibility: teachers should really let them take the full responsibility for responding to each other's work. Stay out of it. If grading is necessary, let them do it. They'll be quite kind usually. I don't know how to get across to other teachers how vain the evaluative games are. And, what is more, we may have too much segregation of ages in our schools. If one lets older kids teach the younger kids in the way that older teach younger around the house after school and all summer long, then the lessons are really learned. It matters how one of your friends responds to what you write.

The fourth point is that using all sorts of 'media' that are commonly used media which have been mentioned at this meeting, would help. The tape recorder can be an instrument for the collection of sounds that these students wish to examine-- sounds from around the home or the community that someone wants to bring in; talk, things that people have said, can be put on tape and fiddled with. Drama can be used. Mr. Holt has suggested that we get students outside the classroom and school building as a way of getting into the world in a more than figurative sense; it is also a way of getting into the essential problem of writing--crossing the chasm between "me" and "you." Not just the student's peers but other ages should be involved in the journey out of the classroom. A use of movies and a movie camera--it's not too expensive to be a part of the standard equipment for the school--would allow for recording from a variety of perspectives and for working out language to go with the perspectives. Communication was a good word a few years ago. I wish that it were still respectable, for its use might foster the idea that writing is one form among many forms of setting forth what one wants others to understand comparable to collecting sounds with a tape recorder or taking pictures with a movie camera. Its currency might encourage the idea that we can handle the same phenomena with various techniques.

In the sort of classroom that I envisage, education would get the kids interested in each other's perspectives and images of the world. Communication becomes the end in itself. We should leave the students alone not by default, not because we don't know what to do, but out of a new and maybe a very old wisdom about learning.

As I. A. Richards said in his Philosophy of Rhetoric, there have been many attempts to revise the teaching of writing; thus far all of them have been poking at the ashes on the top. I haven't gotten down to the coals yet. In speaking of the possibility of focusing on deep structures in working with the language of the child, I hope that I have gotten a little beyond the ashes. I do not wish to discuss how we grade papers or what we should mark as right and wrong usage. We must ask some basic questions about the teacher and the student and the classroom itself which can, I think, get us beyond the ashes on the top.

# CHILDREN AND THE LANGUAGE OF THE SCHOOLS: STYLES AND FORMS

Herbert Kohl

## Introduction

The machine used for recording went awry during Mr. Kohl's speech. The editors of the volume asked Mr. Kohl to reconstruct his remarks, and he did this in abbreviated form. However, in the process, he excised the pictures of school life which gave blood to his argument. The editors have reconstructed the more memorable of these in consultation with Mr. Kohl, partly because they are interesting in their own right, partly because they form the subject of some of the discussion included in section III.

In his speech, Mr. Kohl elicited a number of examples illustrative of what, as he sees it, is happening to the big city, inner city schools: what kids are doing when they are obligated to conform to a school language, to a school system, and to a school curriculum which they see as alien--the product of an opposition culture. One of the episodes which he elicited had to do with a teacher's offering to read the Autobiography of Malcolm X to a number of ghetto kids thought to be reading at a fourth or fifth grade level; the kids indicated that they weren't interested in having Malcolm X read to them--they had already read him. The teacher remarked in momentary wonder: "You read the Autobiography of Malcolm X, but you can't read fourth grade readers?" The students apparently replied, "Malcolm--we can read; those books, we can't." That is, in the inner city, 'culture'--the street or whatever--has taken over many of the functions which the schools have regarded as theirs. Children develop a sort of "folklore" in dealing with schools and school authority: a teacher named Norbert Oldrag becomes, in his student's hands, Aldray, then Osprey, then Ostrich. As he becomes more the bird or the chimaera in his student's eyes, they begin to call him "waterfall-ostrich" in tribute to his long hair. They begin to draw him with a waterfall pate and looking half the ostrich, half a man. Eventually, Norbert's first name becomes Nelly Belle. The teacher comes to be distanced by his alien ghetto students as a kind of metaphoric comic sphinx named "Nelly Belle Waterfall Ostrich." This extramural "folk" culture encourages a considerable amount of writing--much of it in the form of graffiti or secret notebooks; in part, to understand the language of kids as well as their imaginations is to know how they talk and how they represent things to one another outside of the context of the school--in graffiti and so forth. Knowing about such things might allow the schools to know what they are working with (however, Kohl cautioned against invasions of privacy which may be implicit in trying to understand the operative mythoi of kids and certainly against efforts to 'manipulate' kids' talk or their imaginative life).

The student's alienation from the schools is sometimes expressed by his silence or his unwillingness to use the language he commands in the classroom. It is sometimes expressed by over-violent reactions in which he tries to take power over the school away from constituted authority. In the context of displaying both the silence and the violence, how students who sense that they are separate from the schools react, Kohl described the experience of a teacher who with all the good will in the world came up from the South to be a ghetto teacher. He all but told his students how much he loved them. He did perhaps. But, perhaps, part of what he felt was a need to expiate guilt. In any case, his students sat quietly in his class for several months, silently and passively resisting. Finally the teacher could contain himself no longer and said, "I have tried to help you; I have given you everything; and how do you react? Like animals. It really is true what people say--that you are animals." The outburst came and went. The students were not silent. They replied by marching around the room and crying, "We are animals, and we are going to drive you out." They wrote all over the blackboards, "We are animals." They forced the teacher out.

One of Kohl's primary arguments was that the teacher may be inflexible in a modern inner city school because he lacks the emotional equipment--as in the case of above--or because the materials made for him reduce him to the performance of a mechanical set of tasks (teacher-proof material). He indicated that he was less interested in teacher-proof material than in good teachers; his Teachers and Writers project is, for instance, producing a unit on the fable which includes a group of fables, a collection of morals for fables, some description of stock animal types, some anecdotal materials and some representations of historical background concerning the development of fable lore. The material does not tell teachers what to do; it says instead, "You figure out how to use this material with your type of kids." If American teachers presently are like people who are learning to walk after an accident, they now are encouraged to use two crutches; they may need only one crutch, and then a cane; eventually they may be able to walk by themselves. Such a project as the Teachers and Writers project encourages producers of curricula to regard teachers as requiring no more than one crutch; eventually, teachers may come who can throw the cane away.

Mr. Kohl's reconstruction:

The subject I have been asked to address myself to today is how the school should deal with the language of the child; a more interesting way of looking at the language problem in the school would be, however, to rephrase the question and examine how the child is forced to deal with the language of the school. I would like to start by making a distinction between four different types of language:

1. First there is the language of the child, the developing but incompletely formed language that the child acquires from birth until the time that he or she has mastered the adult language.

2. Second, there is the language or part of the language that children develop in their relations to each other, what I would call their peer language.

3. Third, there is the dialect that either the student or the teacher happens to use most familiarly and has acquired from the people he is most often associated with: parents, family, adult neighbors and so forth.

4. Finally, I would like to distinguish what I would call the language of the school, that segment of the English language that teachers use in their exchanges with children in the classroom.

Let me briefly talk about each of these four types of language separately before I address myself to their relationships to each other. The first is what I call the language of the child. People often talk as if the language of the child is a special segment of language which, somehow, the schools are obliged to deal with and to help develop; one of the recent discoveries that linguists have made is relevant at this point, the discovery that practically all of the fundamental rules of transformation and principles of structure needed for a mastery of language are acquired by children before the age of four. In other words, in an important sense the child is in the possession of all of the language structures he will ever have before he enters school; therefore, there is no need for the school to deal with the language of the child in the first sense at all. What the school can help do is increase the vocabulary, perhaps enhance the personal 'style' of expression of the child, but fundamentally the school does not, and cannot, add anything to the language of the child at the level of linguistic structure. One may confuse the child by teaching about language. It may be that asking a child to give too close or too early an attention to 'rules' and individual skills, that asking a child to give attention to specific tasks in handling the spoken language, may interfere with his mastery of language, a mastery that usually develops quite naturally through exposure. This first understanding of "language" does not describe a language to which what happens in the schools has a real--as opposed to a putative--relevance.

The next type of language that I want to talk about is the language appropriate to peers which children develop. Given our particular social pattern, children are constantly at war with adults, especially in the context of the schools; there is usually no natural and easy relationship between the teacher and his pupils. On the contrary, too often the teacher as teacher possesses an image of himself which no human being can live up to; he feels some need to sustain a picture of himself as always "right," good, kind, understanding, intelligent, aware of the best interests of children, etc. Now the effort to sustain such an image of oneself fools none; children are perfectly aware that teachers are just as cruel, stupid, and selfish as other human beings. This is not to say that teachers are only cruel, stupid, and selfish; rather, they are human and in the classroom tend to pretend to be above all that humanity.

Now teachers must stop pretending that they are in a special moral position. They must stop using language in such a way as to pretend that there are simple and unambiguous moral and linguistic rules and judgments that guide our human behavior. Teachers ought to care less about maintaining the roles as "teachers" and more about being human with children in the classroom. In such unnatural circumstances it's quite natural that children can't talk to their teachers about what is really happening in the schools; it is also natural that they speak to each other in ways that they can't use when they talk to the teacher. I am sure we all remember, from our own school days, the secret names we had for teachers, and the secret words we used in order to conceal from adults what we were really talking about. This special part of language that children use is deliberately meant not to be understood by the teachers and the other adults in the schools. I feel that any direct attempt to get into this language is an unwarranted invasion of the children's privacy; the language of children, understood in this second sense, should not be tampered with.

The third language I want to talk about is the language by which the child represents his membership in a group--dialect. There seems to be a common confusion among the number of people I have heard, even people at this meeting, a confusion which suggests that dialect speech, particularly the speech of poor people, is poor--impoverished--whereas the speech of nice middle class people is appropriately rich. First of all, there seems to be a notion that there is such a thing as standard English, a 'proper' way to use English, a somehow linguistically privileged set of forms; with this goes the notion that there are variants of English such as some black ghetto dialect which are linguistically underprivileged. I have even heard it said that some of the variant forms of English speech have no syntax; I want to clear up right now the fact that there is no one standard English spoken dialect that is actually spoken. There is a whole family of English dialects: the upper class New England dialect, the Texas drawl, the hipster's idiom, all variants of English. They are all complete languages; and there is nothing that can be said in any one of them that cannot be said in any other one. The vicious idea, for example, that any urban, black ghetto dialect is weaker in expressive power than any other English speech is just false. The myth that one dialect is more inarticulate than another may be nothing more than a manifestation of the idea that one group of people is innately more intelligent than another.

Let me go on at this point to the fourth language--that is the language that the teacher uses in the classroom. It is my impression that teachers use a small, a rigorously excised segment, of the English language when they speak to children in the classroom. There are whole ranges of human expression that are never touched in the actual dialogue between the teacher and his students. Whole segments of language are taboo: for example, the whole group of terms referring to sex, hate, violence, dishonesty. It would be interesting for some linguist to study the language actually used by a number of teachers in the classroom over a certain length of time to determine the actual nature of the teacher's special language. This special language is what the child is forced to deal with in the classroom; he must accept the terms, the limitations, of the language imposed upon him by the teacher. Often he must not talk about what he perceives because to do so would be to violate the limits of what it is possible to talk about in the classroom. For example, the child must ignore the weakness and error of the teacher who will not use the words "I am wrong" or "I am mistaken" in front of the children.

Let me try to bring together some of the points implied by the distinctions I have made. First, the major language problem of the school is not how to deal with the language of the child. The child's developing language takes care of itself through use and practice. The child's dialect is as expressive as any other dialect and need only be understood by the teachers. There is no natural reason why one, and only one, dialect need be accepted in the classroom. I would go further and say that teachers ought to drop the myth of the one standard and culturally accepted dialect and, as they drop it, encourage linguistic plurality in the classroom. As for the language that students use with each other, not only does the teacher not have to deal with it; it is a rude invasion of the child's privacy to even attempt to deal with it. Finally we are brought to the main point of my talk, which is that teachers must deal with the language which they use in the classroom before a truly honest and open situation can develop. Teachers must use language in the classroom as they use it outside the classroom--in all of its complexity.

# 'OTHER' GROUPS AND 'OUR' CHILDREN

Douglas Oliver
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I'm not sure what relevance my being an outstanding authority on the ethnography of Southwest Bougainville actually has to your interests here this afternoon, but here I am. There are dozens of anthropologists who could have applied themselves more directly to the topic of this conference. My only experience with children comes about as a result of having five of my own--and as you well know, *that* leads to no worthwhile generalizing at all. I did have some association with a nationwide organization attempting to provide social studies curricula for elementary schools; but after three years of it, we (the experts I managed to recruit from Museum staffs and Universities) retired from that fray to lick our wounds. What you have before you today is a committed teacher of, if possible, post-doctoral students; in a pinch I'd be willing to try to generalize about the teaching of pre-doctoral ones, but that's about as far down the educational ladder as I'm qualified to go.

Moreover, the subject you've given me is a most formidable one; indeed, I'm stopped immediately by the wording of the topic you've assigned to me. That is, "The structures of societies other than our own: can children be taught to understand them?" I don't even have any interesting anecdotes to tell you about my experience with this subject. In fact, I think I'd better begin by entering a disclaimer: To wit, most social scientists themselves don't understand societies other than their own.

There are several reasons for this unhappy situation. To begin with, social scientists, particularly anthropologists, have not yet agreed on definitions for most of the key words they use. One of the most famous documents in recent anthropological literature is one composed by the late Professors Kroeber and Kluckhohn in an attempt to distill definitions of *culture*--a key, strategic word for students of society--from the writings of anthropological experts on the subject. Not definitions used by the well-known man-in-the-street, nor by geographers, nor psychologists, and so on; but by the people who make the study of *culture* their own bailiwick, namely anthropologists.

Well, they stopped at number 347 or something and said, in effect, "It is a hopeless situation; it's impossible to achieve any agreement." At which point they proceeded to add another definition of their own.

If the natural and physical sciences were in the same shape with their key words, you can imagine the chaos that would ensue. I can envisage that the major conferences of these desciplines would spend nine-tenths of the program trying to agree on definitions of, say, $H_2O$, just in order to begin. Actually, most experienced anthropologists have long since given up trying to define and reach consensus on the very large words used in their discourse. And my advice to you is to do the same. When one reads school textbooks on the subject, one comes across words like culture, society, values, etc., treated as if they were eternal verities handed down by some national academy, agreed upon by everyone, and used comfortably as if they really meant something specific. Such, I should tell you, is not the truth of the matter.

Let me give you an example(I'll avoid such terms as values, which cause shudders among anthropologists attempting to be precise, and deal with smaller-scale words). Let's consider, for example, the word kinship. Now that is a word anthropologists should know something about. (Goodness knows, they've been studying it long enough, whatever it is.) Even one of the classic definitions of anthropology--namely, Malinowski's--says of it that it is the study of man embracing woman. And that comes pretty close to what many anthropologists mean when they write about a large segment of what they call kinship. But if you will read the learned journals nowadays, you will see that there is a very influential school of anthropologists (mainly located in England) quite ready to do away entirely with the word kinship, believing it to be a hazard to description and theory-making. Indeed, it has become quite impossible for anthropologists to come to any agreement on what kinship should denote, so that the word is used in public discourse only connotatively.

Take another term, i.e. marriage. Several current textbooks on sociology are dominated by chapters on "Marriage and the Family in Cross-cultural Perspective." Well, let me tell you that most experienced anthropologists (by which I, of course, mean those of my age and experience!) have long since given up trying to find a common-denominator definition for marriage which will suit the uses of universal cross-cultural comparison. Some critics say, "Now let's be sensible about this. Certainly in every society in the world a man picks a woman and lives with her and reproduces children, etc." Well, this does in fact happen in most societies, but there are enough exceptions to spoil the game. There are, for example, some stratified Southeast African societies in which high-ranking women 'marry' other women in order to 'father' the latter's progeny -- succession and inheritance in such circles being mainly agnatic. You may counter with, "But that's not marriage. Something else is going there." Then what is marriage? And what shall we do, in cross-cultural comparison, with the kind of arrangement just described? Call it pseudo-marriage? But if we took that tack, then most other societies' institutionalized unions between male and female, or 'male' and female, would be 'pseudo' if we used our own legalized form of the union as the standard form.

Anthropologists attempt to define institutions, not only within the western tradition or by using a couple of highly selected American Indian or Southwest Pacific people for contrast, but by using the whole range of humanity. And, when trying to do that, they have to define their terms broadly enough to be able to apply them to all the wide variations in behavior known to occur. The result has been that anthropologists have, by and large, given up trying to talk in such terms as *kinship* and *marriage* (not to say *values* and *culture*), and now usually stick to smaller scale topics. Some of us are beginning to emerge from behind our protective wall of mystic-symbol terms and use these smaller-scale terms in teaching undergraduates. I'll let you decide whether this is feasible in the teaching of elementary-school children; my hunch is that it is so, since they don't have to be untaught so much before the teaching can begin.

Some of these smaller-scale words and concepts have to do with commonplaces. In this connection, I'm not personally in favor of dealing only with commonplaces. There is some pedagogic value in the shock provided by the bizarre, i.e., I feel that our friend, the neighborhood garbage man, as an introduction to civics can probably go just so far in expanding a young mind. But I refer to other kinds of commonplaces.

Heaven knows, there's probably no habit-pattern quite so commonplace among humans--including, so help me, elementary-school children!--as the utterance of the monosyllabic word. (And *every* language spoken by humans has some monosyllabic words; hence, this is one kind of behavior pattern that can be compared universally.) I wish I could show you a formula for the phonemic pattern that has been worked out by linguists showing variations in forms of *English* monosyllabic words. (One can find such a formula in one of Whorf's papers). If you were to see such a formula in print, you would probably say, "That's too complex; I could never learn to memorize and utter anything so complex as that." Yet, this is a habit-pattern which most English-speaking children have totally mastered by the time they are six or so. Even when they invent little nonsense words, they don't get beyond that pattern. None of Lewis Carroll's most bizarre words transcend it.

The intricacy and *distinctiveness* of this formula can only be exemplified by comparing it with the formula worked out for phonemic-pattern alternatives for monosyllabic words of some other languages--say, Hawaiian. An exercise like this, using a truly universal kind of human behavior pattern--i.e., utterance of monosyllabic words--could be made to show how very widely peoples differ in their ways of staying alive.

Still another use of a commonplace taken from the realm of language might be exemplified by comparisons in the kind of behaviors we know as "thank you." If you ask American students what 'thank you' means in English, they will give you a common-sense definition, to wit, the pleasurable, grateful reaction of a person to something good having been done for him. Well, there's a word in the language of the Trukese people which has been translated into English as 'thank you', and which is so used in their conversations with Trukese-speaking Americans. But, in native situations, that same word is used by a person vis-a-vis someone believed to be killing him by sorcery. That is to say, when a person feels unwell, or has other evidence for believing himself to be under a sorcery spell, he goes to the alleged sorcerer and greets him with the Trukese word which has been translated into English as 'thank you.' Now, that's a long way from our usage of thank you, you will agree. But the situation isn't so greatly different after all. In Trukese terms, about the only person who is ever sorcerized is one who has committed some unethical or immoral act--whether wittingly or not. When such an act is committed, someone else in the community who has the welfare of the malefactor or the community at heart will use sorcery as an accepted means of bringing the sin, etc. to the attention of the malefactor. Hence, such a sorcerer deserves, and receives the victim's gratitude, his "thank you."

There are many other such small-scale topics, "little" concept words, that deal with commonplaces and that might with profit be worked into the curriculum. One of these is the so-called life-cycle. (Actually, this is a somewhat inappropriate term for the phonemenon; there are very few societies in which life is conceived of as 'cycling', as going full circle and starting over again. But the word is a useful one if this reservation is kept in mind; and anyway, it's fixed in the vocabulary beyond any of our powers to change.)

The question might be put: when does life begin, socially speaking, in our society, and in other societies? In terms of our own society the topic is now being much debated in our press. In case you are puzzled, I refer to the topic of abortion, which directly concerns our notions about when a human life begins to have social significance. In our tender-minded society, by and large, life is socially significant as soon as the egg is fertilized, and any action that stops that development is considered more or less homicidal. But there are degrees of becoming human even in our society; the person who commits abortion is not so sternly penalized as the one who kills a newborn infant, and far less penalized than one who kills an older child.

Now, there are no federal laws regarding abortion, so far as I know. Each state decides the question, i.e., at what stage in fetal development the organism begins to acquire the status of humanity; and these state decisions are usually made on the basis of assumptions that are never made explicit, that are, in fact, probably quite unconscious in the minds of the legislators creating the law.

To carry the matter a little further, differences in conceptualization of the 'life cycle' can be exemplified by comparing certain nations' laws regarding murder. For example, in some Western European nations there are milder penalties for killing a child before it has been listed in the local civil register than after, usually only a matter of a few days. In this respect, our own laws regarding penalties for homicide vary considerably with regard to the age and condition of the victim. That is to say, we also have our assumptions, often unconscious ones, regarding the timing of the process of becoming human, in the full social sense.

Coming of age: This also is a "commonplace," particularly to the children you are concerned with. At what age in life--at what biological age, chronological age (and by what steps)--is the child not only in our society but in other societies considered ready for not only the society's responsibilities but for its rewards? I've been making a study of some contemporary Tahitian societies in this respect. Modern Tahiti is dominated by protestant theology; but its legal system is the French-Roman code, and mixed up with this is a whole battery of native, pre-European beliefs and customs about the life cycle. Well, each one of these different codes--native, protestant and French--defines the life cycle in a somewhat different way. The confusion is immense. I think probably our own society engages in this same kind of exercise. Our religious codes define it in one way; our legal codes in another way; our local folk-customs in another way.

Now these are all subject matters which I think have a bearing on the topic I've been assigned. They are "commonplace," and they are not too big to tackle.

Music (another commonplace) could serve as another means for teaching children that societies differ greatly in this universal form of expression, and that such differences are not bad. I remember with embarassment my own training in so-called music appreciation, my somewhat nervous laughter when I heard some music from Japan or India and how my reactions were reinforced by my peers (and I regret to say by my teachers as well). In other words, I learned very soon our own society's attitude that different music is funny, silly, even stupid. In contrast to my own early conditioning in this regard, it should be a simple and highly useful matter to teach children that it is possible to have esthetically satisfying music without expressing it in our musical scale. Or that great operas, quartets (or X-tets) can be composed without our kinds of instruments.

Of course, in all the above talk about commonplaces, I'm focusing on attitudes. I do not propose that children should be taught all these facts about thank yous, or monosyllabic words, or musical scales, or life's beginning for the content they might absorb, but rather for the attitudes that might rub off onto them in the process.

Turning again briefly to another commonplace, art. I think that a lesson that might be embedded in children very early in their schooling has to do with the difference between competence and style. Some of the so-called sophisticates of our society still confuse these two things. You can go to the most refined exhibit of modern art and hear people who should know better say, "Any child could do that." Well, this kind of attitude is engrained very early in life, and it should be guarded against from the first moment when art enters the curriculum.

I understand that one of the books assigned for most participants here is Lévi-Strauss' La Pensée Sauvage. This book has some very opaque paragraphs and even chapters, but underneath it there's a lesson which again deals with commonplaces and is feasible to transmit, certainly to college students, I imagine to high school students, and possibly even to elementary students--namely that the logic of science that we are totally preoccupied with in our educational system is not the only kind of logic. And for certain purposes it may not be the best kind of logic.

Now all of this that I've been talking about has to do with differences in behavior patterns from one society to another. I think another message which should be gotten across, and very early, is that there are also some human universals. First of all in habits, in simple habits that I believe even seven-and eight-year-olds can grasp. Our language, our whole cognitive organization, is almost completely preoccupied with dichotomies: up-down, good-bad, right-left, before-after. Well it should come as no surprise that this is true of most human cognitive systems that we know of. Now why is this true? I would like to suggest to you that one of the reasons this is true and one of the thoughts that might be explored with children, is that man is anatomically bilaterally symmetrical. (I asked one of my youngsters who happened to be nine-years-old at the time this question and got no answer, and then I asked him to draw a picture of an octopus. After he had looked up "octopus" in the encyclopedia and had drawn a reasonable facsimile of it, I then asked him, "Would an octopus say 'right and left'?" He thought for a minute and decided that an octopus not only would not say 'right and left', but he couldn't say 'right and left.' He had no way of deciding what is right and left because of his eight tentacles.) Imagine yourself in a cognitive universe where you had 3, 4, 17 or 22 tentacles reaching out into the surrounding world. Would you be dealing with dichotomies then? I doubt it.

Mankind also is alike in having everywhere certain identical problems requiring solutions. First of all, there is a problem that you're all aware of. It has been written about over and over again; that is the problems arising as a result of the human being's relatively long dependency period, the human animal's shortage of instincts. Now what kinds of problems does this create for the developing human animal? Well, I don't know where this could lead you in founding your curriculum, but it leads me, in talking to undergraduates, into the whole field of comparative education. And I find comparative education a fascinating subject to students, because they are directly involved in education; and they are interested in seeing themselves through the perspective of how other people go about education. I think a lot of mileage can be gained under this vast, amorphous field of the structure of other societies by concentrating on the situation in which the student finds himself becoming "educated."

Still another commonplace kind of universal human situation which requires solutions is the existence in all human communities of variations in productivity. Some people produce more than other people, and different kinds of things; and in the course of a yearly cycle, they produce different amounts of certain things as opposed to different amounts of others. Well, what kind of situation does this inevitably create? Inasmuch as most humans have about the same biological needs and in the same community, pretty similar acquired needs, this means that although everybody consumes or wants to consume pretty much the same thing, there is wide discrepancy between production and consumption, both in terms of individuals and of time. Hence every society is faced with the problem of distributing its goods and services, both in terms of space (from individual to individual) and in terms of time (from times of scarcity to times of sufficiency or surplus). The ways different societies have attempted to solve this problem offer good opportunities for teaching some economics at a very early age.

Take the matter of distribution in space. This leads into discussions of exchange, and provides opportunities for comparing our own exchange systems with those of other societies. To high-light the differences in instrumentalities, while at the same time emphasizing the universal-ness of the problem and of some kind of solution of it, one could profitably contrast our own system of distribution with that of a society that has neither "money" nor a price-fixing market institution. There are rich ethnographic materials for constructing lessons devoted to this topic.

To carry the study of comparative economics a step further, one should devote attention to the problem facing all societies, that goods have to be "distributed" in time, from time of surplus to time of scarcity. This, of course, concerns the whole matter of deferment of consumption, of saving, all very important topics to a child at any age, and all very human.

Now there are other so-called functional requisites which are common to all humanity, many problems that must be met by all societies; and I personally have found these very useful, pedagogically, as devices to get students involved in structures of other societies. (Some people will call this kind of warmed-over Malinowski functionalism. Perhaps that may be so, but as a teaching device it's proved very useful to me and my colleagues.)

As for methodology, I would also like to suggest that there are rich resources, not only for comparing human societies in these regards, but for showing what is distinctively human about these customs by comparing human behavior patterns with primate behavior patterns. I'm sure many of you are aware of the fact that the whole field of primate sociology has been burgeoning during the last decade. There are numerous good books on the subject just waiting to be exploited for pedagogical purposes, and now a growing number of excellent films designed just for this purpose.

So much for generalities--ways in which so-called anthropological generalities might be introduced in to curricula in terms of "commonplaces." But what about subject matter itself?

How many of you have heard teachers say, "When the Germans entered history. . ." "This was before historical times," etc. There's something extraordinarily ethnocentric, "scriptocentric"--about this whole notion that history began when the peoples in question began to write down symbols which people coming later on believed themselves able to understand. One of the greatest missions that education would have would be to enlarge the field of "history" into the field of prehistory and ethnology, to demonstrate to children of all ages that we are not totally dependent upon written documents for knowledge of the past, that there is the whole vast field of archeology--most of which has no written documents whatsoever--and the field of comparative ethnology, which deals in trying to build up cultural-historical sequences through comparisons of traits. Both of these are very useful kinds of tools to add to the budding historian's tool kit. (At the same time I suggest that you will find archeological work absolutely intriguing to children from the ages of six on and possibly even earlier.)

Also, in talking about these subjects, particularly the prehistorical ones and possibly even in some of the historical ones, a certain amount of modesty should be shown by the teacher to indicate that not all problems are neatly solved. This is not only positively valuable in getting students into the process of solving the problems themselves, but it's also honest.

Now there are certain crucial epochs in mankind's history which my colleagues and I have found extraordinarily useful in getting a lot of different kinds of mileage in teaching about history and prehistory. One of these is the whole archeological enterprise in East Africa being carried out by Lewis Leakey--Olduvai. Olduvai apparently marked one of the crucial epochs in man's evolutionary development, when what the physical anthropologist calls the 'hominoid' was in the process of becoming a'hominid.' The kinds of evidence that the archeologists, the geologists, the physical anthropologists, the meterologists are all working on are susceptible to many kinds of interpretation--but they have to do with the first step in a changeover from a free-ranging, largely non-tool using primate to a somewhat more constricted primate, one sticking mainly to the ground and apparently making tools for future use. Many kinds of evidence are needed to make these interpretations: climatic evidence (as reconstructed by geology), biological evidence--the changing form in the braincase, the size of the teeth, the size of the jaw, the kind of posture that can be reconstructed, etc. Now I don't think for a minute that it's necessary for every school child in America to have a firm grasp of the archeological interpretation of Olduvai; but I do suggest that there are available some good data--honest data--having some relationship to mankind's past - and it's not a bad thing to know about that. Also such an exercise provides an introduction into not only the working of the scientific method but the interdisciplinary nature of science and the open-endedness of some of its largest problems.

Another such epoch has to do with Palaeolithic Cave Art. Here the archeological materials, the various interpretations, and so on, can be used to demonstrate another facet of scientific research--humanistic research--that is, the relationship between ecology, the life of the people themselves, and their art--from which one infers certain kinds of religious beliefs, another exercise in discovering and using the materials which most children find rather fascinating.

Still another has to do with the neolithic revolution. Probably nothing that's gone on since has had such an impact on human development as the discovery or invention of husbandry, the changeover of man from just taking what the environment offered in terms of collecting, hunting, gathering, fishing, to actually producing and controlling his food supply. This was a revolution, a technological revolution, of immense consequences which also took place without the benefit of what we like to call Western scientific logic. It generally took place within the context of what Lévi-Strauss calls totemistic logic.

The consequences of this revolution, of course, was increasing population density, which of course created another set of problems which it would be useful and, in fact, necessary to deal with--namely, what were the consequences of increasing density of population? Well in a word, towns and cities. What kinds of problems arose as a result of large numbers of people living together? How were these solved; and in what respect were they not solved? I think it particularly behooves us these days to teach children something about cities--how they began, what they were intended to be (or how they just grew), the problems they solved, and the other problems that they have not yet solved. Now these are all generally outside the realm of what is generally called history, and they use documents that most standard historians do not stoop to use.

Still another way of introducing matters of anthropological concern within the curriculum would be through geography. Here I'll bow out of the picture, but I would suggest that the comparative study of ecologies and ecological adjustments to different kinds of settings--from our beloved Eskimo on up and down to the most highly industrialized kind of urban situation--may have more intellectual mileage than surveys of the amount of wheat produced last year in Kansas.

Now, when would you do all this, and how? I haven't the remotest idea of the pedagogical procedures involved, but I do have some deep-seated prejudices about the matter as a whole. I'm firmly opposed to there being an anthropology course put into an elementary curriculum. I'm just as opposed to anthropology's being taught as a separate course in high school. In fact I'm coming very close to the point where I think that "anthropology" as a discipline--with its professional controversies, its more and more complex techniques, etc., should be largely a matter of post-graduate education, of professional education. This is not to say that the things that anthropologists do should not be injected into the curriculum at various points, but, please, not necessarily under that term, and certainly not in the form of a separate course to be added to an already burdened curriculum.

# MATERNAL ATTITUDE TOWARD THE SCHOOL AND THE ROLE OF PUPIL: SOME SOCIAL CLASS COMPARISONS

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This paper is concerned with the origins and antecedents of educability in young children whose families live in economically and socially depressed urban areas. Educability, as we use the term, refers to a mingling of orientations, skills and motivations that prepare the child to learn in a formal school situation. Educability includes at least three components: first, a cluster of cognitive skills (language, visual and auditory discrimination, conceptual ability, adeptness with logical operations, etc.), a degree of motivation to learn and to achieve in a school and classroom setting (curiosity, interest in inquiry, need for achievement, etc.), and acceptance of the role of pupil (orientation toward authority of teacher and school, acceptance of rules of the classroom and school, an understanding of the central purpose of the school, etc.). Although we are interested in the various influences that create, or retard, the development of educability, this paper is focussed upon the role of the mother in the emergence of this complex set of orientations and response patterns.

The development of an ability to learn in school settings has traditionally been of widespread professional concern only in special cases of children with mental retardation or defects of some kind or in instances of children with emotionally linked blocks to learning or with school phobias. The contemporary focus upon the educational problems of the poor has raised a number of questions about the discrepancy between the behavior and values of children from low socio-economic groups and the expectations for social and academic performance under which the public schools operate. It is frequently observed that children from the lower working-class sectors of American society are not prepared to operate effectively in the schools. One of the assertions we will make in this paper is that this lack of preparation is not merely a matter of level of intelligence but represents orientations to authority, the school, and the learning process that have been learned in the child's preschool experience and are constantly reinforced by his home and community environment.

The concepts and results we are reporting in this paper are part of a larger study, begun over four years ago, which was designed to

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assess the cognitive environments of urban pre-school Negro children and the impact of these environments upon the cognitive behavior and motivation of young children. In attempting to identify and study those variables in the environment of the pre-school child which appear to facilitate or interfere with subsequent cognitive growth, we have focussed upon the role of the mother as a socializing agent in areas of behavior usually associated with success in school.

The general problem to which the project addressed itself was to understand how cultural experience is translated into cognitive behavior and academic achievement. This question, however, developed out of a concern for understanding what is meant by cultural deprivation or cultural disadvantage. There has been considerable documentation of the depressing effect of social and cultural disadvantage upon academic ability. The more basic problem, however, is to understand the mechanisms of exchange that mediate between the individual and his environment. In focussing on the input features of the socializing process, we hope to be able to conceptualize social class as a discrete array of experiences and patterns of experience that can be examined in relation to the effects they have upon the emerging cognitive equipment of the young child. The study was not intended to demonstrate or examine social class differences as such. Rather, the interest in social class divergencies is a starting point from which to understand the specifics of maternal and child interaction which have cognitive consequences for the child.

This conceptual approach represents a view of the educationally disadvantaged child as presenting a problem in acculturation. He comes to the school not only deficient in language skills and in ability to discriminate auditory and visual input but with a pattern of behavior which is not readily adaptable to the school. Typically, he is from a part of the society which has not been permitted to learn and engage in the routine daily social and occupational behavior of the dominant sectors of the society. It is, of course, these sectors of society that have developed the schools, the curriculum, and the teachers with whom he must interact. The alienation he feels from the mainstream of society has begun before he reaches school and his modes of adapting to this fact have created behavior that must be changed if he is to succeed in school. In this regard, the school must serve as a resocializing as well as a socializing unit. The importance of this fact is not generally recognized and its profound implications for early education and for teacher training not adequately explored. The social and cultural distance between the home and the school is sometimes taken to indicate a lack of effort on the part of teachers or a lack of motivation on the part of parents. It seems more likely that neither of these is true and that an attempt to fix the blame upon either the school or the home evades and confuses more fundamental problems in the structure of the society.

It is evident from the preceding comments that we regard the early years as especially significant in the development of educability. This is not so much because of any assumptions about critical periods in early experience, although these may indeed exist, but because of the implications these early patterns of learning have for later experience in the school. In short, they are important in part because they occur before formal schooling begins and necessarily impede or facilitate the transition to academic success. We view early experience as a time when the child begins to learn ways of sorting and ordering the mass of information that his input modalities bring to him, developing techniques for selecting or ignoring the stimuli that reach him from internal and external sources. Part of the role of a socializing adult in this early experience is to give the child categories of thought and ways of dealing with information. These modes of dealing with stimuli may be regarded as information processing strategies which enable the child to make some sense out of the incredibly large number of pieces of information with which he must cope. These strategies are learned in interaction with the total environment, particularly with other persons, and in this early learning process the mother plays a central and perhaps dominant part.

In our view, many of the differences in mental ability and cognitive styles that appear among different cultural and socio-economic groups in the United States can best be understood in terms of the transmission of information processing strategies from parents to children. It is also our contention that there are relationships between the position of the family in the social structure of the community and the techniques children use to deal with information made available to them. Perhaps the most important is the range and number of alternatives for action and for thought that are available in the environment and which may engage the consideration and attention of the family and its members. The degree to which alternatives are available is related to the family's position in the community. A family in an urban ghetto has few choices to make with respect to such basic things as residence, occupation, and condition of housing and on the minor points of choice that come with adequate discretionary income. A family with few opportunities to make choices among events that affect it is not likely to encourage the children to think of life as consisting of a wide range of behavioral options among which they must learn to discriminate.

To recapitulate the conceptual context in which the study was conducted, it is our argument that social class and cultural effects upon cognitive development of children can best be understood in terms of the specifics of interactional transactions between the mother and her young child, that the nature of these exchanges is influenced by the family's position in the social structure of the community and the availability of alternatives open for consideration, that material behavior induces complementary learning or information processing strategies in the child and that the child's early orientation to authority and cognitive activity facilitates or retards his ability to adopt the role of pupil when he encounters formal learning situations in the public schools.*

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The concepts utilized to analyze mother-child interaction draw significantly from the brilliant formulations in Basil Bernstein's writings and unpublished discussions of social learning, linguistic codes, and family control strategies (Bernstein; 1961, 1962).

There are five aspects of maternal behavior under particular scrutiny in the project. The first of these is the mother's techniques for regulating and controlling the behavior of her child. These techniques may be imperative-normative, relying on appeals to formal rules or authority or social norms of conduct. These techniques are especially important because of the relatively low demand they make on the cognitive resources of the child. The second regulatory technique is an appeal to subjective-personal states. In this strategy, the mother or other adult appeals to inner states, to feelings, moods, personal preferences, and approval of others. This technique encourages the child to see himself from another's point of view, to be sensitive to the perspectives of surrounding peers and adults. The third technique is cognitive-rational. In this mode, the appeal is to long-term consequences inherent in the situation and related to the task to be accomplished rather than to feelings and established rules.

A second cluster of behaviors we call maternal teaching techniques. These refer to the ability of the mother to organize and give meaning to the information that reaches the child or to help him make sense of new information in terms of knowledge he already possesses. These techniques appear most clearly in the teaching sessions which we asked the mothers of the project to perform with their four-year-old children. These teaching techniques include the mother's tendency to be specific, to orient the child to the task, to present material and ideas in sequences which give the child some experience in following a chain of ideas in working toward clear goals set for him. They are described in greater detail in other papers (Brophy, Hess and Shipman, 1966; Hess and Shipman, 1966).

Maternal language has been one of the points of special focus in the study. Scales for analyzing maternal language were developed by Ellis Olim and the relation of maternal language to the cognitive behavior of the child was investigated. These were reported in detail elsewhere and will not be discussed in this paper (Olim, 1965; Olim, Hess and Shipman, 1965).

Obviously, maternal cognitive skills are viewed as part of the cognitive environment. The level and style of mothers' cognitive activity are assessed by several techniques including the WAIS and the Sigel Sorting Task. Along with the mother's behavior in socializing the child into the role of pupil, this feature of maternal behavior will be described in more detail in this paper.

Although these maternal patterns of behavior have some interest in themselves, the purpose of this study is to examine the effect they have upon the cognitive behavior and educability of the child. Cognitive behavior is especially difficult to assess at age four and our tests of cognitive performance are very limited: verbal ability, as reflected in the capacity to use labels and respond on measures of performance with verbal answers; the Stanford Binet: performance during the maternal teaching sessions; and conceptual style as indicated by the Sigel Sorting Task.

## Research Plan

A research group of 163 mothers and their four-year-old children was selected to provide variation along four dimensions: socio-economic background, type of housing, economic dependency status, and intactness of family. All subjects were Negroes, non-working mothers, free from any obvious mental or physical disabilities. The research group includes only Negro mothers and children because of the special, historically based, educational problems confronting the Negro sector of our population. It is a racially homogeneous group for methodological reasons. The criteria for selection of sub-groups and the composition of each group were these: Group A came from college-educated, professional, executive, and managerial occupational levels; Group B came from skilled blue-collar occupational levels with not more than high school education; Group C came from unskilled or semi-skilled occupational levels with predominantly elementary school education; Group D also came from unskilled or semi-skilled occupational levels with predominantly elementary school education, but with fathers absent and the families supported by public assistance. Groups were equally subdivided by sex of child and except for Group A, by private and public housing. Typical social class differences in intelligence test scores appeared among the groups (Table 1).

Table 1

IQ Scores of Mothers and Children

(Means)

| Test | Social Status Groups | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | A (N=40) | B (N=42) | C (N=40) | D (N=41) |
| WAIS Verbal IQ | 109.4 | 91.8 | 82.5 | 82.4 |
| Stanford-Binet IQ (Form LM) | 109.4 | 98.6 | 96.3 | 94.5 |
| Difference | 0.0 | 6.8 | 13.8 | 12.1 |

The mothers were interviewed in their homes about their activities with the child, their daily schedules, the availability of cognitive and intellectual stimulation and other features of the home environment thought to be related to cognitive development. The mother-child pairs were then brought to the university for testing and for an interaction session which required the mother to teach the child three simple tasks that she had been taught by a project staff member. One of these tasks was to sort or group a number of plastic toys (cars, spoons and chairs that were red, yellow and green) by color and by function: a second task was to sort eight blocks that differed in color, size, shape and mark by two characteristics simultaneously: the third task required the mother and child to work together to copy five designs on a toy called an Etch-A-Sketch.

In this paper we will present data relevant to several questions about the mother's role in socializing her child into the behavior expected of pupils in a major city educational system. These questions are:

1. What are the elements of the images the mothers of our research group hold toward the school as an institution and toward the teacher as a figure representing the school?

2. What kinds of behavior do mothers of our group believe to be appropriate for pupils in a classroom setting? How do they define the expectations of the school and the complementary role of pupil for their young children?

3. What are the mothers' aspirations for their children ?

4. What relationships appear between the attitudes and practices of the mothers and the cognitive and school-relevant performance of their children?

By the role of pupil we mean a set of behaviors, non-academic in nature, which structure interaction between the child and the basic components of his school experience: the teacher, the tasks and materials of learning, institutional rules, and the peer group. The process of socialization into this role is not direct training: the child's definition of his role as a pupil, his expectations of the behaviors to be demanded of him by the school system, are attained through indirect learning.

Attitudes toward learning, toward institutions such as the school, toward persons of authority such as the teacher, and toward his own abilities and limitations as a member of the public school complex, are conveyed to the child during the pre-school years by older persons in the home environment. More specifically, in her everyday behavior and through the close mother-child interaction obtaining during those early years, the mother acts as the primary socializing agent of the child into the role of pupil.

The poorly-prepared child is not uneducable because he has learned nothing during the pre-school years, but because he has learned the wrong things. Successful socialization should result in a set of behaviors conducive to learning, the child is capable of establishing a good working relationship with his teacher, he is prepared to deal with her both as an authority and as a source of information, and he has confidence in his abilities to manipulate materials and to attempt challenging tasks. Unsuccessful socialization is expected to lead to a poor teacher-child relationship, resulting in the blocking of information transmittance, and to a set of behaviors disruptive to the learning situation. The child who has learned to be compliant and submissive, to regard himself as ineffective in dealing with authority and inadequate in problem-solving, comes to school unready to meet the demands which are made upon him. This set of hypothetical events is seen as a potential explanatory model for the lower-class child's inability to meet successfully the role-demands of the public school system.

### Mothers' Attitudes toward the School

The primary instrument for assessing the images the mothers of the research group held of the school was composed of rating scales developed through interviews, pilot administrations and item analyses. The final instrument used in the project included 27 items each of which was to be rated on a five-point scale from "Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree." A factor analysis of the responses yielded six factors accounting for all items: each item was heavily loaded with only one factor.

Scores reflecting each factor were obtained for subjects by summing responses (on a five-point scale) to the individual items comprising each factor: a high score, then, represents disagreement with the individual item contained in the factor. Mean scores for each of the four socio-economic status groups, on each of the six factors, are reported in Table 2.

Table 2

Mothers' Attitudes Toward Education

(Means)

| Attitude | Social Status Group<br>A<br>(N=40) | <br>B<br>(N=42) | <br>C<br>(N=40) | <br>D<br>(N=41) | Range of Possible Scores |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Low Score Indicates: | | | | | |
| Powerlessness | 18.0 | 17.0 | 15.0 | 14.3 | 5-25 |
| Conservatism | 19.0 | 17.6 | 18.0 | 16.7 | 5-25 |
| Resignation | 14.7 | 12.7 | 11.3 | 11.7 | 6-30 |
| Importance of Education | 11.2 | 11.0 | 9.4 | 10.2 | 4-20 |
| Importance of Non-Academic Goals | 8.5 | 9.2 | 10.0 | 9.7 | 3-15 |
| Defense of Schools | 8.4 | 8.4 | 8.0 | 8.4 | 4-20 |

_T_ tests were computed for differences between mean scores of each group contrasted with each other group: those reported here as significant reached a probability level of .05 or better.

Factor one includes five items which suggest frustration, futility, and the uselessness of attempting to change either the system or the unruliness of children. Middle and upper-working class mothers tended to disagree with the statements loaded heavily with this factor, while mothers in the two lower-class groups tended to agree with them. All differences between classes were significant except that between groups C and D.

Items significant in factor two suggest conservatism, an attitude which discourages fun in life, and complaints about the "waste of time" in extracurricular activities provided by the school. Although social class differences are not so great as on the first factor, middle-class mothers tend to disagree with the central theme of this factor, and mothers in the public assistance group to agree. The middle-class group differed significantly from both groups B and D.

The central theme of factor three is optimism vs. pessimism and resignation to one's lot. The factor is composed of negatively loaded items, all of which express feelings of optimism and of reliance on education for bettering one's lot. Lower-class mothers tended to agree with these negatively-stated items. All class cross comparisons were significant, except that between groups C and D.

The items comprising factor four express positive attitudes toward the School system, and the importance of getting a formal education. Middle and upper-lower class mothers tended to disagree with the central theme; lower-class differences were significant except that between groups A and B.

Factor five deals with the issue of whether success in formal education is the most important goal in life. Mothers from middle-class backgrounds feel that other things are also to be highly valued: mothers from groups C and D emphasize the overriding value of an education.

In their attitudes toward education, then, mothers from middle-class backgrounds rejected themes of powerlessness vis-a-vis the authority of school, denied a conservatism which dictates more work and less play, denied an optimism which says that formal schooling is the only means to a better life, and agreed with the notion that there are other goals in life as important as education.

Group B mothers showed less intense feeling on these factors but they tended to agree with group A mothers in denying that they are powerless and that education is the central hope for bettering one's lot in life.

Mothers in both groups C and D agreed with statements of the futility of attempting to use one's power against the school system, but they also tended to agree with the notion that a good education is an important means to improving one's status. In addition, mothers in these groups tended to express or endorse a conservative attitude, a rigidity about working and not wasting time on play.

A second, less direct, opportunity to describe the school was provided by a task requiring mothers to describe what they believed was happening in a photograph of a mother and a teacher seated at a large desk in a school classroom. The mother was given the following instructions: "Here is a picture of a teacher and a mother together in a school classroom. Can you tell a story about why the mother came to school and what they're talking about here in the classroom? We would like to know what is happening in the picture and what will happen as the result of their conversation."

The first distinction to be made was whether the meeting between mother and teacher was perceived as a problem-oriented session. Although in each group more mothers described the meeting as problem-oriented than did not, the difference was less for the middle-class group (67%) than for the other three groups (95% 76% 74% respectively). Among those mothers describing the meeting as problem-oriented, there were no clear trends as to differences in the type of problem described.

Mothers were also given an opportunity to reveal their views and feelings about the school in the interview in response to this question: "If you had the power to do as you wished about education in the school, what would you do?" Mothers' responses to this question were grouped into categories: 1) those suggesting no change: 2) those suggesting changes which are commonly held to be within the domain of an educational system [changes in curriculum or other academic aspects, in the physical plant, or in the school's mechanical and administrative functions, (reflected in responses concerned with the need for more schools and teachers or for special facilities, discipline of children, and improvements in the training of teachers or in their motivation and dedication)] and 3) those arguing for changes in the school as a social-political institution or as an instrument of social policy (responses dealing with integration, school-community and parent-teacher relationships).

Although more than one type of response was possible to this open-ended question, the majority of mothers gave short replies containing only one suggestion: 16 Group A, 7 Group B, 3 Group C and only 1 Group D mother made suggestions in more than one area.

Because the number responding in any one of the nine specific categories was very small, the response-types were grouped into the three main types of categories described above. When $X^2$ values were computed for each of the three response-groups (use vs. non-use), social class differences were significant (p L .01) for each. Twice as many mothers in Groups C and D as in Groups A and B had no suggestions: the majority made vague references to improving the schools, said they had never thought about it, or did not know what they could do. And twice as many Group A and B as Group C and D mothers made concrete suggestions for changes in curriculum, in physical and administrative aspects of running the schools, in discipline, or in training of teachers. Finally, more middle-class mothers discussed issues involving the school in a wider social and political system than mothers in all other groups combined (Table 3).

Table 3

Mothers' Suggestions for Improving the Schools

(Percentages)

| Type of Change Recommended | Social Status Groups A | B | C | D |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Essentially None | 12.5 | 26.2 | 48.7 | 51.2 |
| Educational | 70.0 | 66.7 | 38.5 | 43.9 |
| Political, Social | 35.0 | 11.9 | 17.9 | 4.9 |

### Mothers' Interaction with the School

A mother's feelings about herself and her relationship to the school system may set the pattern for her child's belief about the typical relationships of the individual to the institution. How does a mother describe her role in interaction with the school and with its main individual representative, the teacher?

Statements of mothers' feelings about their relationship to the school and its representatives come from their description of the relationship between the mother and teacher in the photograph. Responses for mother-teacher relationship were scored on the relative status positions ascribed to the two women and the affective tone or mood of the described interaction. A third consideration, especially if there was a problem being discussed, was whether the outcome was good, hopeful, or poor. The proportion of mothers utilizing each scoring category is reported in Table 4.

Although the differences among groups were not statistically significant, there were some apparent differences in patterns of response. The greatest proportion of respondents described the relationships as a working together of the two women to reach a solution or agreement, with neither dominating and with no friction between them. This response was more typical, however, of the Group A and B mothers than of mothers in Groups C and D: the latter tended to describe the mother as a passive figure seeking information and advice from the authoritative teacher.

A response describing the relationship as one of equality in which the affect was explicitly positive and both parties were exchanging information and gaining insight was found far more often among middle-class mothers than among mothers in any of the other groups. Lack of information about the relationship or its affective tone was far more typical of Groups C and D than of Groups A and B.

Middle-class mothers, then, saw their role in interaction with the school and its representatives as one of equality: the mother's meeting with the teacher was typically seen as a friendly visit between equals who were interested in gaining insight into the child's behavior.

Table 4

Mothers' Perception of the Nature of the Mother-Teacher Relationship, by Social Status (Mother-Teacher Protocols)

(Percentages)

| Relationship | Social Status Groups<br>A<br>(N=39) | <br>B<br>(N=38) | <br>C<br>(N=37) | <br>D<br>(N=38) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Positive: cooperation of equals or working together | 59.0 | 42.1 | 21.6 | 31.6 |
| Conflict | 23.1 | 28.9 | 24.3 | 31.6 |
| Passivity | 10.3 | 23.7 | 40.5 | 23.7 |
| No information or vague | 7.7 | 5.3 | 16.2 | 13.2 |

Mothers in Group C, while they did not emphasize positive affect and equality to the extent that middle-class mothers did, tended to describe the mother-teacher relationships as a working together of the two to reach some common goal.

Mothers in both C and D groups tended to describe the mother's role in the conference as a passive one; mother went to the school to ask the teacher what to do; or she went to "get satisfaction" from the teacher for something that had been done to her child, and the conference was characterized by friction between the two which might not be resolved. Group C and D mothers were also more likely than Group A or B mothers to ignore or to describe only vaguely the affective relationship between the mother and the teacher.

## Mothers' Definition of the Role of the Pupil

How a mother defines the school indicates which aspects of the new situation (i. e., new to the child) are most important to her. Until he has entered and actually experienced this new realm, the preschool child's notions about school are likely to be hazy and inaccurate. He can, however, anticipate it, especially if his mother prepares him, drawing his attention to those aspects she deems most important. If she does not tell her child what she thinks of school nor describe the daily round of a classroom, she will often express her attitudes and expectations indirectly, guiding him in developing attitudes and behavior she believes will be necessary for his success in school.

To obtain the mother's definitions and perceptions of school, they were asked to imagine that it was the first day of school: "Your child is going to school for the first time, what will you do, what will you tell him?"

Responses to this question were scored for six categories. The "obedience" category includes responses in which the mother defined the classroom as a place where the child would have to behave in a socially accepted and obedient manner toward the teacher and/or his peers: to conform to classroom routine: to follow a set of rules pertaining to health, safety and property rights: or simply to behave or be nice. For example, a mother in the public assistance group said that she would tell her little girl,

> "to obey the teacher. Do what the teacher asks her to do and that's all to do or say. Just tell her to sit quiet and listen at the teacher and do whatever the teacher tells her to do and get her lessons."

Another, less concerned with school itself than with getting there and home safely, said,

> "I would tell him to be aware of cars, you know, don't step out in front of a car is something that is dangerous. And don't pick up different things that don't concern him. Go straight to school and come straight home from school."

A somewhat less explicit statement of the importance of obedience was given by a Group C mother:

> "Well, the first time I would tell him to be nice and learn to listen to the teachers and do what they tell him to do and mind,"

while a Group B mother listed a group of behaviors she expects her child to remember when he goes to school for the first time:

> "I'd tell him to go right straight to school and stop at the patrol lady...don't cross, because she tells you to. Mind your teacher: be nice: raise your hand, and when you have to go to the bathroom ask her, you know, and don't talk in school, don't eat any candy or chew any gum. Be nice."

Mothers of middle-class background tended to elaborate more and to suggest rather than to demand obedience.

> "I will tell (her) that she is beginning her education. And here she will learn to play with other children. She will learn to listen to the teacher and how to act properly in a control situation such as not talking out any time she wants to...And I will tell her to be very

> cooperative and do whatever the teacher wants her to do. And try to be friendly and get along with the children."

The following middle-class mother drew an analogy between obedience at home and at school:

> "The only thing I will definitely stress to her is authority, that the teacher becomes the authority head. Mother and Daddy are the authorities at home, and that she has to respect and obey the teacher and likewise the teacher will respect and obey her wishes and I think this is mainly what I will tell her about it: that there is authority outside of the home and this is it, you are just going into it, your teacher will be your main center of authority at school and you must obey her as I want you to obey me."

A second response category defines school as an opportunity to attain increasing levels of achievement in academic skills. A mother might say, as did one in the public assistance group: "She's going there for to learn things which will help her for whatever she might want to be when she grows up": a Group C mother said, "I'd tell him that I want him to go to school so that he can prepare himself how to work or help him get a good job."

In addition to defining school as an authority system or as an educational system, some mothers were concerned with the beginning school as an emotional or affective experience. These mothers anticipated their children's fears of the new and strange experience and stressed the adventurous aspects of meeting new people and the change in status from baby to "big boy." One middle-class mother, concerned with affect, spoke only in positive tones:

> "First of all, I would take (him) to see his new school, we would talk about the building, and after seeing the school I would tell him that he would meet new children who would be his friends, he would work and play with them. I would explain to him that the teacher would be his friend, would help him and guide him in school, and that he should do as she tells him to. That will be his mother while he is away from home."

A public assistance mother was more explicit about the potential negative feelings:

> "Well, by her being kind of bashful, the first thing I think I'll have to go with her. And tell her that she only have to stay here for a few hours and play with the kids. And everything's going to be fine. And she'll be able to come home. I'll come and pick her up when school is out."

An eloquent statement of mixed emotions was given by a Group C mother:

> "I know he gonna be ner-frightened, you know, to stay there by himself, uh with the teacha. I just don't know what I would tell him. I try, I'd tell him that, uh, that he gonna have a lot of fun, you know, with the drawin' and everythin', and uh, playin' with the rest of the kids. Lots of kids there to play with--the rest of the children. And I'll tell him that I'll be back for him, and uh, it's fun, it's a lot of fun to go to school, cause he looks forward to goin' to school, but I know that first day, when your mother leave you, you just don't know what to do."

Responses to this open-ended question often constituted or included statements which did not directly answer the question. Mothers mentioned actual experiences the child had had which they felt were helpful in preparing him for school, such as visiting the school or playing and talking about school with older siblings and friends, or actual skills that she had attempted to teach him herself, such as tying his shoes, or learning his ABC's. A Group B mother related that she would tell her daughter "how to undress and pull off her shoes and rubbers and how to go to the washroom, and hang her coat and hat and things like that." Concern for the academic aspect of school was expressed in preparation by a public assistance mother: "I would help her with her ABC's, things like that. I would help her learn to count, you know, and do as much as I could to help her."

The coding system devised for responses to this question defines a unit as a completed thought, usually a subject-and-predicate clause. For each respondent the number of units devoted to each scoring category of response can be expressed as the percentage of the total number of units contained in her response. It is for this reason that vague and irrelevant response-units were included in the total score. Table 5 reports the average percent usage of each category obtained within each of the four socio-economic status groups.

Overall level of response (that is, the number of total message units), did not vary much among the four groups although a slight trend was seen for both total length and variety of response to be greater at the upper socio-economic levels.

It is clear, though, that the total response is partitioned differently in the different groups of mothers, with an especially marked difference in the use of obedience and affect categories by the middle-class mothers as contrasted with the other three groups. Middle-class mothers are apparently more concerned with the emotional aspects of the new situation, with its meaning to the child, than with his displaying good behavior; they are perhaps more aware of the emotional aspect than are the mothers in the other groups.

As a group, in responding to this question, mothers paid only slight attention to academic achievement and formal preparation for school, although middle-class mothers did show a greater tendency to relate relevant incidents, either coincidental or purposeful, to which their children had been exposed. Vague and irrelevant statements made up more than a third of the total response in all groups. It is interesting to note that in the A and B Groups irrelevant statements were more common, whereas in Groups C and D, vague responses predominated. Responses labeled "irrelevant" generally took the form of ramblings about unique, personal qualities of the child or his anxious anticipation of the beginning of school.

Table 5

Mothers' Relative Use of Different Response Categories on the First Day Technique

(Mean Percentages)

| Type of Response | Social Status Groups<br>A (N=39) | B (N=40) | C (N=38) | D (N=40) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| School Relevant Instruction: | | | | |
| Obedience | 21.3 | 49.1 | 44.2 | 46.7 |
| Achievement | 2.2 | 1.4 | 2.9 | 3.2 |
| Non-instruction Orientation: | | | | |
| Affect | 31.2 | 14.3 | 14.5 | 21.5 |
| Preparation | 8.6 | 3.9 | 1.1 | 1.3 |
| Other: | | | | |
| Vague | 16.4 | 13.7 | 23.4 | 17.5 |
| Irrelevant | 19.6 | 15.2 | 13.2 | 12.8 |
| Sum | 99.3 | 97.6 | 99.3 | 103.0 |

It seems, then, that middle-class mothers were aware of the emotional implications of the beginning of school experience for children and were sensitive to the need for reassurance which would make this exciting adventure less strange. They tended not to define a mother-teacher meeting as a discussion of specific problems with a child, but as a friendly exchange. They made specific suggestions for changes in the school system which indicated awareness of the various functions of the school, and of the role of the school system in relationship to the larger society.

The Group B mothers stressed both obedience to a new authority, the teacher, and general good deportment in the child's behavior on beginning school: they defined school as a place in which the child is expected to conform to a new routine. More than mothers in any other group, they described a mother-teacher meeting as a problem-oriented session, the topic being the child's grades or a combination of grades and conduct. They made concrete suggestions for changing the school, specifically in its physical-administrative functions and in the quality of its teachers.

The Group C mothers, too, defined the school as a situation calling for conformity and obedience to authority. They saw a mother-teacher meeting as a conference oriented toward some problem: although relatively unspecific as to its nature, it was likely to involve the child's school work and perhaps also his behavior. Given the opportunity to make suggestions for changes in the school, they agreed that there was need for improvement but did not know what they themselves should or could do.

The mothers on public assistance (Group D) were very similar to the Group C mothers in their definition of school: it is a system of authority to which children must conform. A mother-teacher meeting was viewed as a session oriented toward solving a specific problem with a child's grades, behavior, or some complaint about something the teacher had done to the child. These mothers, too, may have stated that the schools needed improving, but did not make specific suggestions and, more than mothers in any other group responded, "don't know," or some other indication that they had not really thought about it, or that they did not think they could accomplish anything.

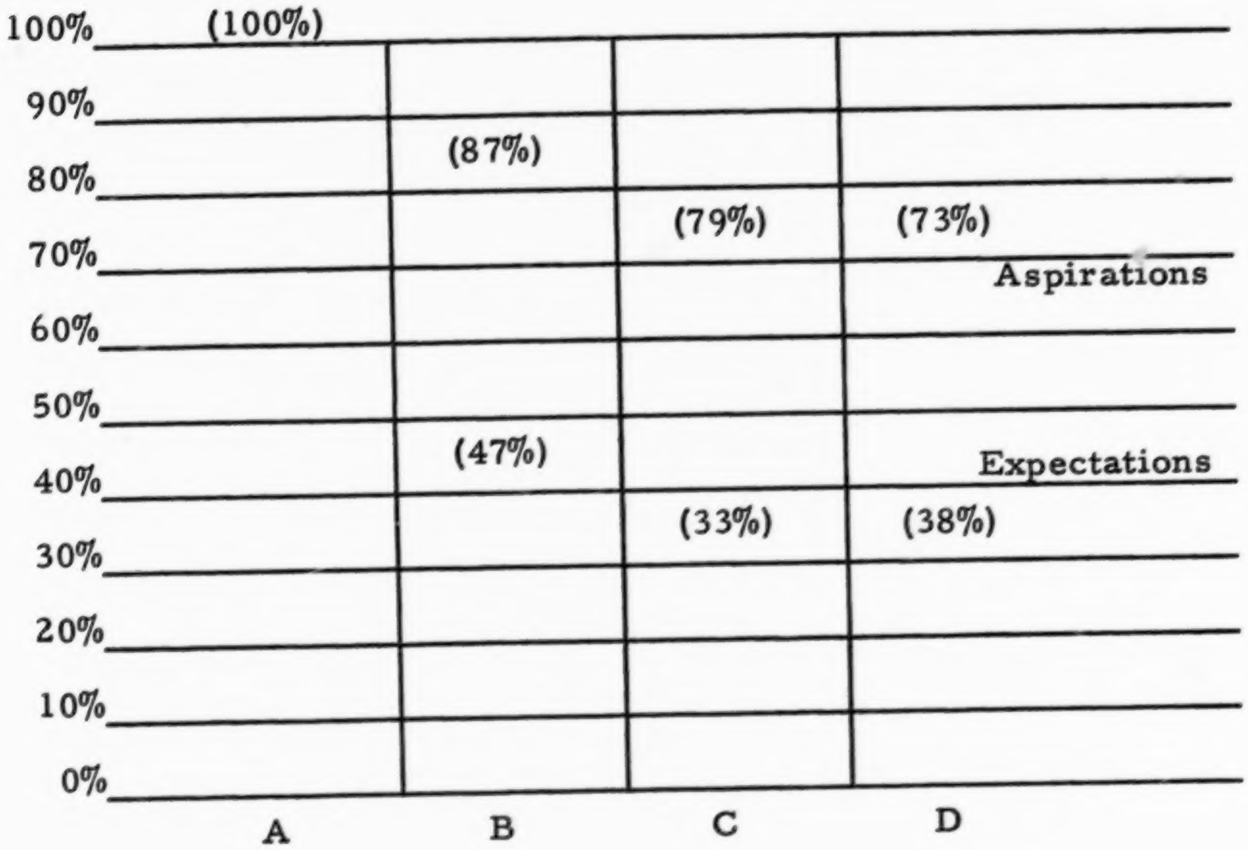
## The Mothers' Aspirations for the Child

It has already been noted that working-class mothers feel a powerlessness and a lack of personal effectiveness against the authority of the school system, although they have great respect for education as an important tool for achieving a better status in life. They express a belief in the importance of good behavior on the part of their children. The frustration which appears to accompany these attitudes and beliefs was strikingly illustrated when mothers were asked about their aspirations and expectations for their children's educational achievement (Figure 1). The majority of mothers in all social class groups said they would like their children to finish college. The majority of mothers in the working-class groups, however, when asked how far in school they thought their child would actually go, were less hopeful. Group B mothers' aspirations and expectations were more diverse, but the majority of those who aspired to a college education for their children also expected that their children would finish college. Discrepancy between expressed aspirations and expectations among middle-class mothers barely exists: they wanted their children to finish college, and they believed that they would.

Figure 1

Mothers' Aspirations and Expectations
for Their Children's Educational Attainment

(Percentage responding at level of college attendance or above)



## Discussion and Summary

In this paper we have described some of the significant aspects of the attitudes that mothers of young children hold toward the public school and toward education. We have also examined the degree to which the mothers' attitudes and behavior are reflected in the child's performance in various tasks and tests in our study. These are only rough estimates of what will happen when the child eventually arrives in school. We are now in the midst of a follow-up study that will determine in a more adequate manner how these early maternal attitudes will be translated into children's behavior in kindergarten and first grade. It seems important, however, that even at age four these attitudes toward the school are associated with certain cognitive and other behaviors of the child. Although these relationships have been reported in some detail in other papers (Bear, Hess and Shipman, 1966) it may be appropriate to summarize them here. The mother's attitude toward the school as reflected in the Educational Attitude Survey is significantly related to the child's IQ and to the child's behavior in the Stanford-Binet testing situation. The two factors that appear most frequently in these two sets of data are factors one and six. Factor one (feeling of power or powerlessness) is particularly important. It is negatively related to the child's tendency to engage in initiatory behavior in the Stanford-Binet testing situation, to his quickness of response, social confidence and comfortableness with an adult examiner. Thus the mother's attitude toward the school, which is apparently part of a larger cluster of attitudes toward herself and toward achievement in areas related to education, already has a discernable influence on her child's ability to deal with adults in formal testing situations and his ability to perform on cognitive tasks.

The images that these mothers hold of the school and that are probably transmitted to the young child in some form are particularly relevant for early education and the child's success in the school. The mothers' attitudes indicate that the problem is not due to a lack of respect for the school or to the belief that it is ineffective: it is due to the fact that the mothers regard it as a distant and formidable institution with which they have very little interaction and over which they exercise very little control. This leads to the kind of injunctions and preparation indicated in responses to our "First Day" technique where the mothers from working-class areas typically talk in imperatives, presenting the school as a place in which one must obey the teacher and follow the rules rather than as an opportunity for interaction and learning. Thus the initial relationship between the child and the teacher is posed in terms of authority rather than interaction and in terms of rules of obedience rather than inquiry and exploration. This early attitude supports and reinforces the passivity of many working-class children who come into contact with middle-class institutions. It represents an orientation toward authority and toward learning which has indeed been taught by the mother and by the community environment and which needs to be modified through experience with teachers who interact on a basis other than authority and obedience. We have explored this issue in more detail in the paper discussing the relationship between maternal control and authority and the developing cognitive processes of the child (Hess and Shipman, 1966).

If the general picture that has been sketched here applies, it would seem to have implications for parent education, particularly as regards interaction between the school and the parent. It suggests, for example, that engaging parents in the activities of the school in some meaningful way may indeed assist the child in developing more adequate and useful images of the school, of the teacher and of the role of pupil. More interaction between the home and the school, particularly in cases where the children are coming into the first grade or kindergarten might make the initial orientation smoother and easier and provide an initial setting for the child in his first contact with the school that would make the task of re-socialization somewhat simpler.

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# PLENARY DISCUSSION SESSION

Tuesday, September 19, 1967

## Introduction

The following material is taken from a transcript of a plenary discussion session of the Tri-University Project conducted on the evening of the first day of the Denver conference. The participants and staff of the Tri-University Project were present as were the speakers, John Holt, Douglas Oliver, Joe McVicker Hunt, Alton Becker and Herb Kohl; and the consultants, Tony Milazzo (Michigan State) and David Reed (Berkeley). The discussion was lively and sometimes angry; people who wanted to get heard did not always get heard or heard at the length which they wished. The transcript has been edited so as to remove passages in which speakers reiterated what appears in their speeches; logical connections implied in the spoken context but not obvious in the written have been furnished, as have a few transitions. Some sequences in which the temper of the discussion was such as to render recording difficult and transcription fruitless have been omitted as of ephemeral interest.

The issues raised in the early section of the discussion may be important to the education of the teachers of the young, though the way in which the issues are posed may not always strike one as particularly relevant to the problem: the question of the surprise value of the study of exotic societies raises the general question of how teachers can be trained to produce the surprise and "defamiliarization" which will allow the student to see the old with new and clear eyes; the discussion of *mythoi* raises the question of the extent to which the education of the teacher should be education in the subject matter assumed "basic" to a curriculum sequence;[1] the extent to which it should be education in matters of the logic, cognition, and 'psychology' operative in our culture and others (Oliver and Hunt)[2]; or, finally, the extent to which it should develop in the teacher the "critical" sense, the capacity to view

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[1] Some curriculum "structure-makers" have assumed, rightly or wrongly, that "myth" comes before literature and before history in the history of a culture or in a child's education.

[2] The teacher so trained might understand the cognitive styles of adults in his own culture and in other groups and the cognitive style of his students.

Western institutions in the shadow of non-Western ones, Western mythoi in a demythologized light (Kohl). And the query as to why anthropologists, and by implication school people, do not deal "with the fascinating materials involved in Christian mythology" raises the problem of the degree to which American teachers are trained to handle materials which bear on belief, Christian or non-Christian, in a fashion consonant with the demands of scholarship, sensitive to student belief, and consistent with the spirit of the law. One could go on. However important these questions, two other questions seemed to be crucial in the discussion:

I. How are teachers selected? Once they are selected and trained, are they given authority to 'operate' in the classroom as they see fit? In short, how "professional" is the 'profession' of the teacher of the young and how professional can it be?

II. What is the teacher's precise role as mediator between the child who does not know and the world of adult competence and knowledge?

## I. The Profession, The System and The Education of Teachers:

Mr. Rabozzi's discussion of the emotionally disturbed teacher raises the question of how those who go into programs to mold teachers are selected. Teachers have not exercised a control over who shall enter their ranks at all comparable with that exercised by doctors or lawyers. Few of us have been concerned to clarify for prospective teachers what emotional demands will be placed upon them; fewer still have been concerned to postulate what emotional demands may properly be placed upon a teacher: "Teaching as the search for identity; teaching as self-annihilation."

The discussion of what one would have to do in the Boston system to secure for oneself the opportunity to do "a good job of teaching" (using the Boston system as a real or fictional ogre) implicitly raises the question of the extent to which school systems create or destroy quality teaching through the very fact of making systematic demands upon people. It also raises the equally significant question of the extent to which the universities, through their subject matter departments and their Colleges of Education, prepare people to work in real school systems and to envisage ideal ones. Indeed, what our "systems of education" are from our large cities to our small towns, whether benign (Jarolimek) or monolithic and oppressive (Kohl), deserves objective description; the prospective teacher, looking to go into teaching in the public schools, needs to know what business he is entering.

The whole question of the relationship between school and culture as regards the schooling of teachers needs to be examined more carefully than it has been; if one urges that the token-reward system for encouraging learning is destructive of the learning process itself, if one urges that the creation of competition and fear of failure in the classroom is destructive of the capacity to learn in those who are not 'winners,' then may not one also urge that such a system is destructive in the education of teachers in the universities and in the controlling and rewarding of them in the school system? But if, on the other hand, the school is the reflection of the culture and its competitive thrust, if what the school does essentially is to give training in competition and the fear of failure, as Jules Henry argues,[3] would it not be destructive--given the 'system' of rewards in our society--to create in the schools a spirit other than that which prevails beyond the walls of the school? And is there any real possibility of doing so on a large scale?

## II. What a Teacher Does and The Preparation of Teachers:

The central and most lengthy discussion of the evening had to do with the role of the teacher, the role of the curriculum and the role of the student in the learning process. And this discussion was useful in that the discussants forced the speakers to clarify differences among their positions. No speaker seemed to dispute the idea that 'education' for the young primarily involves 'getting out of children's way,' 'guiding them,' and 'preparing an environment'--getting together 'things' that kids can work on, can transform, concerning which they can formulate hypotheses, and by which they can be surprised. Nobody was willing to plunk for a lot of teacher talk or lectures, or for set periods or set subjects, or for kids in rows and all in their seats.

But there the similarity among positions ended. Holt urged a school which would get out of the child's way by letting him explore a rich but not necessarily deliberately arranged environment, allowing the child's interest to be his 'curriculum' and the teacher's guide as to what should be brought to the classroom. Hunt's remarks, on the other hand, suggest that certain kinds of phenomena will naturally evoke surprise, interest, and a desire to account for them because they run counter to the child's cognitive expectations and force him to rethink his hypotheses about "how things go together": e.g., the eighteenth century varnish can experiments. "Preparing the environment" for Hunt seems to mean deliberately seeking for "surprise" by setting up situations in which the child's natural expectation or "hypothesis" (the explanation consonant with his learning set) will be broken up; and he asked to rebuild it; direction for him seems to mean offering an increasingly complex sequence of 'surprises'--episodes requiring increasingly complex logical accounts, trusting to such a sequence to bring kids to the place where they can handle the logic, language, and numbers necessary to modern man's ecological niche and his technological society. Hess would appear to accept Hunt's premise but to see such episodes as properly determined upon by the teacher and the 'system,' which can together develop a sense of where the child must go if he is to be intellectually mature and which together can regulate benignly while training the child to recognize the demands which the human systems do make upon individuals.

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[3] Culture Against Man (New York: Vintage Books, 1963), pp. 283-321.

Somewhere in the middle of the discussion Douglas Oliver, in a beautifully phrased off-the-cuff answer to a question from Jim Hill, seems to suggest that the whole argument about whether the schools should have students explore 'rich' circumstances or 'arranged' circumstances or 'circumstances arranged according to the demands of a benign system' had missed the point by confining education to what the children can dream. Oliver seems to say that there are species of information--insights, logical structures, pan-human events, and problems--so crucial that no human being--introduced to them subtly and meaningfully--can fail to be engaged by them. What Oliver suggests is that what is wrong with the "body of knowledge" doctrine as practiced in our schools is not the doctrine itself but the triviality of its interpretation--our conception of what is worth teaching; that, also, is partly the burden of Becker's remarks concerning surface editing and of Committee V's speculations as to whether reading and writing are necessary subjects in the age of McLuhan.

What has this discussion to do with the preparing of teachers of the young? Well, perhaps we might say that Holt's prepared teacher is a teacher experienced in knowing how a child feels and where his nose is pointed; a teacher has to know White Fang if he is to offer it to a child at the time when he is writing about lonely travelers and white mountains. Mr. Hunt's prepared teacher would have a capacity for analyzing the child's cognitive level, what games and play and 'set up' situations would evoke in him surprise, interest, growth, and the formulation of hypotheses. Mr. Hess's prepared teacher would know the culture--the system: the home culture, its style of teaching; the adult world and what it demands; the necessary demands of internal coherence and 'machinery' in the schools. He would instruct in whatever style the situation (system) required to make the child the father of the man. And Oliver's prepared teacher would be a scholar with a sense of the absolutely relevant.

One's temptation is to try to force some syntheses of these positions--to reduce them to a single blend. People who read this report may try, but there may be no useful way of bringing the positions together; it may be that one can better make a teacher of children by pressing on what is idiosyncratic in each of these four ways for a whole undergraduate (or graduate) career than by trying to create programs which "unite the best" in the four.

This introduction has not said much about what Becker and Kohl said, partly because they took positions which ranged among the four set forth. Both had things to say about school and society. The startlingness of Becker's conception speaks for itself, the conception that if our society judges men by the surfaces of their speech, then our society is evil; that the business of education is not to change children's speech, and the business of the education of teachers not to teach them how to change it; that the business of education and of teacher education, being to make a good society, is, in this case, the business of creating a society which does not judge men by their 'linguistic' fashions. And Kohl. After a generation or two or three of "teaching democracy in the schools," we may profit from the reminder of a ghetto teacher that "we certainly haven't been able to teach democracy very successfully." One wonders to what degree Kohl's remark also applies to the teaching of teachers, to what degree the teaching of teachers in the nation has been asking them to bow first to this idol and then to that, to process and then to subjects, to Dewey and then to Bruner or Frye or Bloomfield or Chomsky, without ever giving them the tools to comprehend or the techniques to reject which alone would also make acceptance a free act.

Paul A. Olson
Discussion Chairman

**ANDERSON:** I'm William Anderson of the University of Nebraska part of the Tri-University Project and I have questions to pose to Professor Oliver. I am wondering if the curricula that you proposed for the elementary school need be so exotic as you suggest--if there may not be as many useful problems in American anthropology that might raise themselves as there are in distant worlds. Secondly, I would like to know how can we relate what anthropologists know to the teaching of literature in the elementary school? What is there of anthropological study that would lend itself to application in the world of literary criticism or the teaching of poetry in elementary education?

**OLIVER:** I once heard a very distinguished writer of social studies textbooks describe an approach involving starting in the family, then going out into the neighborhood, and then into the community, and then into North America and South America. One finds a certain amount of aesthetic appeal in that concentric approach to societies, but I don't think it has a great deal of shock value. I'm sure that there is a great deal of shock value for a middle-class American child in the suburban school to be told about exotic societies. On the other hand, I imagine the situation is totally different in New York where they're surrounded by exotic ethnically-different societies. In other words, I think you'd have to tailor your approach to the community.

The value in talking about other societies is the shock value of the extreme case. But don't make too much of the extreme case *as the extreme case*; use it to exemplify and bring the lesson back home. For example, I just wonder why it is that, in the comparative study of religion, anthropologists have never been impolite enough or indiscreet enough to talk about some of the fascinating materials involved in Christian mythology, but they never do. It's always the other fellow's, the savages' religion, not our civilized religion. As for literature, what do you mean by literature? Does this presuppose a writing system?

**ANDERSON:** Not necessarily...

**OLIVER:** To speak of 'oral literature' strikes me as semantically in 'bad taste.' If one could use a more general term to apply to creations, imaginary creations, then you get into the whole field of mythology. A great deal exists in the field of mythology--literature without writing in many cases. Or a mythology may be written and perpetuated in that way. But anthropologists, by and large, have not been too competent in the field of the oral literatures of other people; they've made the assumption that people who have special training, special experience in the field of oral literature and mythology, should deal with it; by default, they're having to do something about it. And the most relevant and useful work to date has come from two directions: linguists working with people who are interested in folklore have said useful things about mythology and oral narrative; and, more recently, the approaches of the formal ethnographers and of the people concerned with cognitive style, such as Claude Lévi-Strauss, have furnished us with a good deal that could be taken back into the classroom. But anthropologists, by and large, have not been mainly concerned with what literature can say to anthropology.

MILAZZO: I'm thinking about the extremes, the problem of being able to profit from looking at the extremes. /Milazzo here turns to the formulation of school policy/

If the disadvantaged are one extreme, there's a danger of looking at the whole thrust of elementary education in terms of the disadvantaged and the problems of the deprived: the danger of creating another category of men, another area, another separate kind of entity in the human race. While we can profit by dealing with the extremes, we ought to make our look at the extremes serve as a way of allowing us to do a better job, to deal more meaningfully with the less extreme kinds of cases. The extremes may provide an opportunity for our getting a Trojan horse into some of our bigger problems.

The Special Education people have continued to operate as if they are dealing with eccentricities in dealing with Indian children or whatever, people separate from the rest of the educational enterprise; they have 'given attention' to deviant situations by taking a remedial, a compensatory, kind of approach which is somewhat condescending. We ought to look at what we can do to do a better job for those at the extremes; we ought also to use what we can learn from dealing with the unusual, to get at what we can do to better teacher education and education in the complacent middle.

OLSON: Mr. Kohl.

KOHL: I guess my feeling is that I don't believe in this myth of the extremes, quite frankly. We're as extreme as anyone else; we are as primitive as anyone else.

We don't bother to look at ourselves in a light which would make us appear somewhat less rational and more mythic than we would like to think we are. One of the real functions of anthropological study is to show us what we really are and to destroy a lot of the myths we have about ourselves. When you talk about the cogency of social systems and look at the incoherence of ours, when you talk about the function of myth and look at the fact that we don't have a coherent myth, you are doing something. You are providing children, in that context, with a way of looking at themselves in a context a bit humbler than that in which they usually place themselves. You are destroying the myth of progress and the myth of civilization as a 'moral thing'; that, in itself, is very useful.

The way in which anthropological insights can be used is very central. For kids to discover that people think, that they think all over the world, that they deal with problems in many different social structures and that problem-solving is not a unique attribute of western civilizations--that is a very important matter.

OLIVER: I'd like to enter a slight caution, here, though. I think cultural relativism served a very useful purpose in American intellectual life, but I think, having served that purpose, it itself should no longer remain a myth. I think there's just as much intellectual dishonesty to saying that we are better than anybody else in certain respects as it is to say, "One way of life is as good as another." One is throwing judgment out the window both ways. What I would prefer to have students do is to keep their minds open.

We *can* propose certain objective values for humanity: for example (here I'll be accused of vulgar non-relativism), it seems to me that physical health is a desirable state. You can point out that many great works of art have been composed by people who've been very ill and so on and so on. But by and large, physical health is a useful goal for a culture. All right, having said so much as a working principle, what kinds of social structures, what kinds of technologies, diet habits, and so on help promote physical health? I think we ought to keep that in the picture rather than give way to a sentimental cultural relativism.

KOHL: What I meant is that social health is as important as physical health, that it is something that we haven't been able to deal with in our society and other societies.

EZER: I'm Melvin Ezer from the New York University Project. /Mr. Kohl/ You've done a beautiful job of telling about the insights, the intellectualization of what's happening in the classroom, which you have been able to do and yet you don't talk about the turmoil, the inner conflicts, which you have been through. What I'm suggesting--there's something else to learning to teach well, and I think you've all alluded to it. You talk about the search for identity or helping the kid search for an identity; I think you've also said that the teacher is a human being. Well, damn it, I'm still searching for my own identity. And I think kids have to realize this, too. And I guess I'll never find it since, as Frankel says, the meaning of life is the search for the meaning of life. I don't know if we ought to help these kids get an identity when we so badly need one ourselves.

KOHL: I can only partially respond. It's difficult.

EZER: You get the flavor of...

KOHL: Well, let me try to respond...

EZER: Go ahead.

KOHL: Learning how to teach was perhaps the most exciting spiritual adventure of my life, one which is very far from being complete. I was a very, very bad and a very totalitarian teacher when I started. I'm often that now. Learning to understand the kids was at the same time a matter of learning to understand myself and to deal with myself. And, you're right! This morning I didn't talk about that. I have tried to talk about it, tried to write about it. I tried to write a book which was precisely that, which was really a story about learning to teach. The book is complete, and it will be out--actually in about a month. The book is called *Thirty-Six Children*. What it's about really is my walking into a class with thirty-six black children and panicking and just being frightened and scared to death; and, really, it is about the kind of things I had to go through in order to *stay*, in the first place. The easiest and quickest response was--flight: it's very easy to put any failure on kids, and say it's an impossible situation and then fly from them. After that first difficult year, things were different the next year.

**EZER:** The most difficult things, *I* think, are the most important to document. [The discussion goes on as to whether Kohl will document the "difficult things" in his book. It then turns to a teacher whom Kohl has mentioned who fled from a class calling his students "beasts."]

**OLSON:** Mr. Hunt.

**HUNT:** I have a history of working as a psychotherapist for a good many years, and there's one statement from Adler that I would like to quote at this particular juncture: "Never strike a child except in anger." Now the point one of my ex-students makes is that one must develop a strategy for talking when he is angry. Instead of saying, "You little beast, you animal," you recognize instead that the child's action is "irritating the hell out of me." But it's the *action* that is irritating, not the child--the child is not a beast or an animal. Such a strategy throws the child's behavior into a context where one can deal with it; one is no longer working in an adversary-to-adversary relationship. I remember once when my wife was sick and our younger one was a baby; I was running up and down the stairs with various things. My older child, who was then five, was continually getting in the way because she couldn't get my attention any other way, and I would say, "Judy, get out of the way!" Finally, I saw the hatred in her little face, got the point of what I was doing, and I let her hit me a few times while I acknowledged how difficult I was being. Her hostility evaporated.

EZER: The actual act of this teacher's calling the kids "animal" was not that evil. If the dynamics of the situation could have been understood both by the teacher and the children...

KOHL: At that point, you see, he had no longer any desire to understand them.

EZER: O. K.

KOHL: No one ought to reach the point of saying, "I have had enough; I'm disengaging myself from this human situation."

EZER: But your teacher--he did that a long time before he made that statement.

HOLT: Now, one of the things that makes teaching very difficult for a great many teachers is that they are trained to think they should always have kindly, loving feelings toward their students; they're not helped to feel that they're not always going to feel this way. Teachers have a right to get sore. I find a great deal of the time that what really gets under my skin when I get sore is that students act in a way that is threatening to my own concept of myself. I've come into class with a 'big wonderful idea' or 'some wonderful notion' about myself in relation to them, and their behavior undercuts it. I get sore.

RABOZZI: Rabozzi, from Washington. I don't know if I want to read the question. Maybe someone will react, but it disturbs me a bit. This incident of the teacher who finally left in desperation, and others like him, disturbs me in that such people ever get to the classroom. The idea that anyone can, because he loves children, get a job as a teacher is frankly wrong. I think teachers ought to do their homework before they get to the classroom. And getting to know children while you're getting paid to do it is, I think, immoral. Now, I'm not preaching, but it bothers me that all these kinds of personal problems get into the classroom and have to be resolved in there. This is a focal point in teacher education that we ought to take a sharp look at; we are sending people into the classroom who are not prepared to handle students or themselves and I don't think it's that darned difficult.

**HUNT:** [Hunt answers in a fairly personal way which amounts to saying, "Come off it."] In psychotherapeutic literature, it is often the case that when individuals have lost their cool "things began to happen!" When they lose their cool, then they begin to talk to each other, not in terms of an 'ego ideal,' that was 'up there,' not in terms of some kind of 'strategy for coping.' *They really began to talk in terms of relationship*.

We live in the ever-moving Now with our emotional reactions at the top of the Now; the fact is that to say that these reactions are our main motive powers is like saying that you are a chicken with his head cut off.

Let me give another parable for our confusion about when the emotions sit in our motivational scheme. Porteus, who was a psychologist and who did a lot of social psychology with the Pitchantara in the Bush of Australia studying social facilitation among them, came out to his old truck; it had a starter that went *ah-ooh*, *ah-ooh*, *ah-ooh-ooh-ah*. Porteus came out one morning just at sunrise; he heard this *ah-ooh*, *ah-ooh*, *ah-ooh* from voices of a whole group of these Pitchantara. Then he saw the medicine man, who was the chief of the tribe, hunched over and holding his hands on the steering wheel just like his native driver, one who'd been reared in one of the mission schools. As the medicine man would hunch over, he would nod his head and his group of natives about the truck would start *ahooha*, *ahooha*, *ahooha*. *ahooha bbdbdddrrr*. After this had happened three or four times, Porteus asked his native driver what was going on. The driver looked embarrassed, said, "Oh, you have to pardon them. They think, and their chief thinks, that if they get the sound just right, they will be able to make the truck go." So he is scolding them in between these times because they're obviously not getting the sound right since the truck isn't going.

To say that the expressed feelings are the relationship, the motive powers binding teacher and student, is like saying that the chief's sound is the motive power. That is, I think, the point of the illustration after illustration which Haim Ginott has given us.

CLEGG: Ambrose Clegg, from the University of Washington. My question is addressed to Mr. Holt. I found your remarks a fascinating recapitulation of some of the best of John Dewey, Kilpatrick, and maybe a bit even of Rousseau and Pestalozzi; but my question is, how would you translate your suggestions into practice in solving the problems of a great city school system like that in Boston?

HOLT: [Holt then goes on to describe what he thinks the problems of the Boston schools are: a restrictive administration, the sense of loss of power in Irish or Italian administrative groups; he also recommended bootlegging innovation into such schools.]

I think what I say to teachers [working in situations where they cannot teach without a program, curriculas, grades, lesson plans and so forth] is "Go as far as you can in the direction of reducing fear and tension in the class, reducing this element of making judgments about children or reducing among the children the feeling that learning is a competition among each other to see who can please the teacher most or get the most rewards." And at the same time, I would say, "Expand as far as you can the opportunities for children to make choices about the ways in which they are going to do their learning." And "Expand as far as you can the ways and the opportunities they will have for evaluating their own learning rather than submitting to some kind of outside evaluation." Now how far this may be depends a lot on where you are.

One of the things I did working within a fairly conventional school was to stop grading papers where children could see the grades; I was still obliged to give grades every quarter but what I said to my fifth graders was, "This grade is a private communication between me and you and your parents." I could go on a long time talking about the ways teachers can, as I say, get rid of this notion that education is some kind of war of student against student to see who can please teacher most.

But somewhere in the United States there is a teacher who had a class of poor mathematics students. And she tried something; she said to them, "You may, if you like, pick a partner to work with and you don't have to, but if you want to, you and your partner can hand in all your papers jointly, including your tests. Do the work together, sign both of your names on the paper. You'll both get the same grade." And he discovered that this enormously reduced the anxiety in the classroom and raised the level of the whole class. Yes, he did, but he was working in a rather unusual system.

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Well, we know it as the practice of "close the door and teach."

JAROLIMEK: They've been doing the things you [Holt] describe for twenty-five years in elementary education--in good elementary and secondary schools anywhere in the country. This is nothing new; this has been going on for a long time.

HOLT: Excuse me, what has been going on a long time?

JAROLIMEK: The sorts of things you're talking about.

HOLT: Are there really many schools in the country which have no grades?

JAROLIMEK: Yes, about 8 million.

HOLT: No, no, no, no.

JAROLIMEK: I would say the schools you cite are exceptions. Supervisors do not repress this [individual, free] kind of activity; they encourage it in every place that I know.

HOLT: Good.

JAROLIMEK: And the kind of situation that you are citing is the exception.

HOLT: Well, now, if, well I think you may very well be right; but, of course, most teachers don't know this.

JAROLIMEK: They do.

HOLT: They do?

JAROLIMEK: Oh, yes, they do.

HOLT: Um?

JAROLIMEK: We have a very sophisticated group of teachers these days. They're not the teachers of twenty-five years ago. These people are intelligent, they're scholars, they know their business, they're well-trained and they know about individual differences, they know about the things you're talking about. As a matter of fact, they've been doing this a long time.

[The discussion then turned into a somewhat vehement argument as to whether the Summerhill, Leicestershire, "free" model for the elementary school, the model that Holt had been proposing was a model widely emulated in the United States. The group was then challenged to produce a case of the effects of restrictive policy.]

KOHL: Let me just go through a few things. You talk about one case. I'll give you an example of someone by the name of Eric Mann who taught in Newark and who tried to just open up his classroom and not teach things in an absolutely structured step-by-step way, not force his kids to perform and to test and to do exactly what in fact they weren't doing anyway--that is, pretend that they had to deal with curriculum at certain levels which they were perfectly incapable of dealing with. He was kicked out of the system.

Two months ago, there was someone thrown out of Philadelphia because he'd asked his kids to write and to write what they felt. I think that one can go down this list.

In the New York City school system, talk about the curriculum: curriculum bulletins are beautiful, really. They're very open, but they're on levels. There is a first grade curriculum, a second grade, a third, fourth, fifth and sixth. Your kids happen to come into the system and don't happen to be reading; you're still forced to deal with the sixth grade curriculum, whatever that may mean with respect to your kids. I mean, you know, I really think that one has to look at the relationship between the myth of what one thinks one's doing and what one is really doing. One hardly can pretend anywhere that urban schools are successful. I think this is perhaps one of the points that really is the most important.

The urban schools have been a failure. They're a documented failure in the terms of the people in the system, and they are a failure in any other human way. And in terms of what you were talking about--the impact on the system--I don't know that furtive classrooms here and there in the system will make that impact. /i.e., Holt had argued for the impact of 'furtive classrooms'/ Something else has happened. Something else--one of these things is Sandy Jenk's article in the New Republic, talking about alternates to the public school system. The other is a development of a network of independent schools. There's a school in Boston, one in New York, one in Newark, one in Washington, one in Ann Arbor: they endeavor to create an impact by creating paradigms of successful schools, financially, working with the same budget as the public school systems, having the same class sizes, same numbers of people in a room. They are showing in fact, without any of the other kinds of things that teachers want, that one can make a success. That is to say, the kids can be in there and can be very excited in doing things and feel that their life in school is meaningful and useful. And I think that, if there's an impact on the system at all, it may come from the fact that schools will exist in the urban ghettos, which will be successful schools and which will exist outside the context of the system, but they will increasingly apply pressure upon people from the system. It may not be a very hopeful solution. At the moment, I feel it's the best that can be offered.

SAETTLER: But what you're saying is that there is some dynamic in the social system of the bureaucracy of the large school system that does not operate in the paradigm school. We recognize that. But what I want to put my finger on is what are those factors?--so that we can learn to change. Does this mean decentralization of the large school system or the creation of some other kinds of mechanisms; I think that's the answer rather than saying that there's a difference in the two school systems.

OLSON: I'd like to ask Mr. Milazzo to speak to this point.

MILAZZO: Well, my reaction is a reaction which involves our looking at the various components of the kinds of schools that Mr. Holt has been talking about today; as I thought about some of the places that I know about over the country, I said to myself, "Well, we can point to a place here or a place there that perhaps has all of these components and more." But I think that the tendency in this country has been to take pieces of the Leicestershire model or the Summerhill model or the Dewey model or the Piaget model or whatever and to use the pieces without looking at the total package. We can have a non-graded situation for three grades; we can have a team-teaching situation; or we can have something else, but we tend very often to have many things going on in pieces, and we say, "Oh, we've tried that fifteen times." But do we really continue with things and carry out a full paradigm? If you look at the infant schools which we talked about today, one can see some places in this country where that kind of thing is going on. But such schools have not been tried in this country in anything like the degree that they have been tried in England--one third of the schools there. They are not a demonstration. At least one-third of the school programs in England have implemented this kind of an approach. On the other hand, I tend to think that the British infant schools may well be really built on American philosophies, theories, and approaches; somehow they have been able to do what we thought and in a more complete way than we have. Until we get some educational systems going that deal with all of these variables simultaneously--something that can be set up to be shot at and modified--we're going to have difficulty.

MCLEOD: I'm June McLeod from New York University. I expect, Mr. Hunt, that this question should be yours first. I've heard it said today that we should leave the children alone to learn; and I have also heard it said that, if we intervene, we can enhance learning. I don't know whether we are being advised that intervention is only appropriate for younger children, that, in the elementary school, we have been intervening for so many years that now we've become very rigid and prescriptive so that now what we need to hear is, "Leave children alone, they will learn best if you leave them alone." I wonder if there is a difference between what Mr. Hunt would advise for early childhood and what he would advise for later elementary school work; or are you, Mr. Hunt, advising a more intensive kind of intervention than Mr. Holt seems to hold out for? I wonder if there are some helps you could give us as to when we should intervene and when we should leave children alone. If you could tell us when to intervene, I think a lot of us here would know how to handle the school systems.

HUNT: Well, you've laid it on the line. I'll return it. My point here is that you stay out [of the way when you are with the child in a learning situation]. Now I'm not sure Bob Hess will agree with me. But I think an awful lot of learning can go on between the child and things, the child and books, the child and problems, and the child and the models presented by others around. A teacher doesn't have to be in there either continually asking questions or giving examinations or demanding that everybody look at her or him. In other words--"Stay out of the child's interrelationships with his circumstances; observe him and work on making those curricular circumstances more interesting to him." Where I would advocate intervening is intervening by preparing the environment.

MCLEOD: That's right.

HUNT: You intervene by preparing it in a fashion that gives the child a variety of different kinds of problems, a variety of different kinds of models, arranged according to their complexity.

MCLEOD: Does this frighten you a little bit?

HUNT: It doesn't frighten me a bit. This is what I'm doing in Teheran; this is what I try to do in an orphanage situation. I refer to the kind of work I am doing with infants (and that frightens some people in this country) to illustrate what I believe will work with older children in schools.

SAETTLER: Saettler at NYU. Could you be a little more specific? Your approach sounds a little passive from the way you described it. Can you be a little more specific?

HUNT: Well, now I think this is what you people are worried about. You want to be in there bangin' away at it! Well, I've got one way--the Montessori approach. The child will get engaged with the things surrounding him if the right things surround him. Now, if he doesn't, you haven't got the situation set for him.

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: This intervention, this preparation of things, then becomes your curriculum.

HUNT: My argument is not that this is not a curriculum. I do think it is a curriculum and it's a planned curriculum, but the kind of "preparing of circumstances" which I describe is one that may be different for each child or each group of children.

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: But Mr. Holt, this morning, made some disparaging remarks about *a* curriculum or *the* curriculum.

HOLT: Yes, I did. So many years of English, so many years of mathematics and such and such arithmetic skills at the end of such and such grade, such and such spelling. I spoke of *a curriculum* in that sense.

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: However, this intervention now that you, Mr. Hunt, are talking about becomes whose curriculum? The teacher's curriculum? You said that the *teacher* prepares the environment; there is a difference here between what Mr. Holt has said and what you're saying, Professor Hunt.

HUNT: I don't think that Mr. Holt and I are far apart; if you've got a curriculum that doesn't engage the child, that he doesn't perform operations on, you haven't got a curriculum that he's going to become engaged with. Then your intervening is useless. You have to get something that gets hold of the kid somewhere along the line.

**UNIDENTIFIED VOICE:** But this morning, you called teachers manipulators. And I don't look upon your use of this term as derogatory simply because it's conventionally used as a derogatory term. If you're a good teacher, you can manipulate the environment so that kids can become interested. Now we have the other side of the coin; we've got to find out what these kids are interested in, and I. . . .

**HUNT:** Mr. Holt and I may have a difference; I'll take my stand. I started to react to this business of cultural relativism in terms of the concept of the ecological niche. I do think that participating in our technological culture calls for a certain kind of growth. I think that being able to handle language and numbers so as to solve logical problems with them are probably the key cognitive activities that we must learn to perform. There are probably some others (what Bob Hess calls "style" and what I call "learning sets") that are also probably important. Coping repeatedly with a given kind of problem until one has a kind of strategy for solving logical contradictions--this is important.

If a child has really been an activist and has been able to get something interesting out of his activism even as a baby, he will learn a cognitive style and a set of strategies which will make him at home in a technological culture.

**OLSON:** The lady in the orange dress said that she wanted Mr. Hess to respond to her question, too. Do you still wish him to?

**MCLEOD:** If we can intervene in dealing with the language of the child, we can intervene in a great many things. Psychologists tell us that we can advance learning if we "prepare the environment." But one can prepare the environment as an authoritarian prepares it or as a democratic kind of individual prepares, adding something to it by his individual presence.

**OLSON:** Mr. Hess, do you wish to speak to that?

**HESS:** I think that what I would say would only deepen the controversy. I'll listen.

**OLSON:** I think that deepening the controversy would be healthy. We should deepen the controversy.

**HESS:** I suspect that I'm not altogether with some of my colleagues on the matter of the place of intervention in education. Education is intervention and socialization--as is parent-child discipline; I use discipline here in the benign sense, and I use intervention in the same sense. I don't really see anything wrong with intervention or discipline. It seems to me to be that the purpose of education is the enterprise of intervening and disciplining: my children go to school for twelve years; that they should go and not be under the expert guidance of someone who has some notion about something that they should learn before they get out strikes me as ludicrous. The question is not whether we intervene, but how? --Not whether there is a curriculum, but *what is it to be*?

**MCLEOD:** Would you add also, please, *why the curriculum is to be*? Because this seems to be an essential question.

**HESS:** I can't answer that one; I'm delighted to have it brought up. Perhaps someone else can. One thing has impressed me about the kind of intervention that we have been talking about: a possible cogent objection to existing systems is not that existing systems intervene. The cogent objection is that the schools intervene with things that seem to the kids and to many of us pointless.

I don't mind my kids being required to do things if what they're required to do has some point at some time; it doesn't have to have a point *that* day. I guess I feel that a school system or a classroom which deals only with what the kids are interested in that particular day or can be interested in within that week is limited; that is not the complete range of possibilities open to study. On the other hand, the kind of situation that's been described by some of the speakers here--setting up the situation in which a child can learn--I have no quarrel with this at all. This "spontaneous" learning ("spontaneous" in quotes, because it isn't spontaneous; it has been carefully anticipated) is learning permitted because a situation has been set up with *a kind of experience in mind*. I don't think that the creation of a situation in which communication is possible is an accidental matter, whether the experience be learning how to communicate by giving a person an opportunity to communicate or to learn to communicate in a situation that is supporting and benign. There's too much money spent, there is too much at stake in human terms for it to be accidental; I don't mean by this you have from Monday morning to Friday afternoon laid out in a schedule.

The unstructured, flexible curriculum and learning experience is almost inevitable in the elementary school situation: kids are active and involved. They want to take five more minutes on this topic so you don't cut them off simply because the number of minutes allotted to *this study* for that week has already been used up, but such a flexibility doesn't seem to me to imply that you bring kids in and let them learn anything they want at their own speed and without guidance on the part of the teacher or the system. I'm reminded a little bit of some of the controversy about parent-child interaction of about twenty-five years ago; the argument about the permissive versus the strict parent--all of it missed the point. The problem is not whether parents provide some kind of regulation, some kind of guidance, for their kids; but really the way in which they do it. Do they do it in ways that cut off and squelch whatever energy, creativity, curiosity the kids have, or do it using some other technique? *There are many ways to control kids;* I tried to say that this afternoon. Control and regulation in any kind of a social system does not have to be authoritarian. But the idea that a school would be an unguided place and that somehow the people who presumably have the responsibility for teaching and for education should have no notion of where they think the whole system is going--I confess that it takes me a little aback.

[The meeting recessed briefly]

**OLSON:** John Holt, you indicated that you wished to speak at the end of Mr. Hess's remark. Do you wish to speak?

**HOLT:** I don't expect everybody, or necessarily anybody, to agree with me, but I do want to make my position clear; and I don't want it to seem less radical than it really is. I don't believe that I or any adults in education ought to be in the business of deciding what this or that child will be made to learn. Now this is partly because I think, from experience, there is no way to make somebody learn something that does not seem to him at the moment meaningful, necessary, interesting, useful. What we can get from some students is what I could supply when I was a student, which is the appearance of learning--all the right answers, correct questions on the exam and then a forgetting of the whole thing a couple of months later when the need for appearing to know it is gone. In other words, I do not believe that we can stuff certain kinds of knowledge willy-nilly into children's heads. But I would be opposed to doing it even if I thought I could do it. What I get out of my observation of young children is that they learn so extraordinarily effectively when they make their own choices. I think confronted with anything as complicated and multi-faceted and rapidly changing as the culture we live in, people have to explore in their own way and your way is not my way--it's not anybody else's way.

I once had a student who was a very, very poor reader, a fifth-grader, eleven years old; his achievement test scores were on the third grade level. We had a thing called the "Composition Derby" in which the aim was simply to see who could write the most words in a certain period of time. (This foolish device did manage to break down some of the students' inhibitions about writing.) I noticed that this particular boy wrote all of his papers about some lone traveler walking in the mountains or through the woods or snowstorms--these were the kinds of things that seemed to appeal to his imagination. So I said to him, "Charlie, have you ever read anything by Jack London?" He'd never even heard of him. So I got hold of *Call of the Wild* and *White Fang* and said, "You might like this. If you don't, that's all right; just put it away. But give it a whirl." And he read and he liked them very much.

If, by guidance, you [i. e., Mr. Hess] mean this kind of thing--sure, I'm all for it; this is one of the kinds of things which we, adults, with our much greater experience with literature can do; if by guidance, we mean, subtly deciding that children are going to learn this, that, or the other thing next, I'm opposed to it.

BROOME: I'd like to direct my question to Mr. Becker. Before we recessed Mr. Hess suggested that perhaps we should not abdicate our role as teachers. I'm not suggesting that that /that we *should* abdicate our roles/ is the message I got from you, Mr. Becker, except that I would like to ask you, "What then shall we do about dialect differences at the elementary school level /if we are not to abdicate our role?/" As I recall, this morning you rather took exception to the teacher who praised the child who got the 'right ending' on the verb. Yet, all of you gentlemen who spoke today expressed yourselves in the prestige dialect. How did you get it?

BECKER: /Becker reiterates points which he has made in his address. Then he says/: "I think I am asking for a different image of social relationships in our society; we're blowing back--in I. A. Richards' terms--the ashes away from the coals. /Becker then suggests that basic to a change in attitude toward dialectal acceptance might be a system of social relationships capable of accommodating 'difference' and communicating across it./" And it was a bit disheartening to me that the people who are here feel that the radical changes which have been proposed--I regard them as radical--are already present in our schools or else that they are things which are undesirable or which will result in the undesirable. For the English teacher, a number of things might make a difference in the creation of a more open, non-valuative system: for instance, the teacher might participate in the writing. The teacher might write herself.

BROOME: It is tremendously idealistic of you to suppose that our society will accept all of these idiosyncrasies in spelling and speech; yet, would you deny that all of you here would not be here if you did not have prestige dialect?

BECKER: The fact that I wouldn't be here without my nice prestige dialect is a condemnation of society--the worst condemnation of society that we've heard in many ways. I am not trying to change the speech of children so much as I am trying to change the attitudes of society--of teachers and of schools toward their language.

**REED:** I'm glad that Becker brought out this last point; what is being argued here is the question of whether we are trying to change the children's language or whether we are adopting the alternative of endeavoring to change society's attitude toward language. The question is a very hard one to deal with; it will be many, many years, if ever, before society changes its attitude.

**JAROLIMEK:** There are at least two dimensions of this that need to be considered; first of all, there is the problem of society's expectations. We just can't let kids come to our school saying, "I ain't got no pencil," and sanction it. Society does not place that kind of expectation on its schools; we do expect some change in these youngsters--or why do they go to school? If they are going to continue talking the way they've always talked, thinking the way they've always thought, then they had just as well not go to school. It seems to me that the school has some responsibility to change a student's behavior in certain ways toward 'more acceptable forms,' whatever these may be.

**HOLT:** These are questions which I have had to deal with as an elementary school teacher.

One of the students that I taught at the Rocky Mountain School over at Carbondale became a friend of mine. When he was a senior at Harvard, he told me that none of his teachers had ever corrected his papers in such detail and with such careful surface editing as I had; I felt pleased. Then I had a little afterthought. I said, "Did you ever read these corrections?" He laughed and said, "Oh, no." I said, "Did anybody else in the class, as far as you know?" He said, "No, no. Well, we'd go down the margin looking for humorous comments or something that might give us a laugh, but as for going over all of those observations about style and thinking about them...." He said, "No, you write a paper, you get it back with a grade on it--zip, it goes in the wastebasket."

Now I don't do surface editing, and I have written why I don't: "A student will only be concerned about his own use of language, will only care about its effectiveness--he will only try to judge its effectiveness and, therefore, be able to improve its effectiveness--when he is talking to an audience, not just one that allows him to say what he wants as he wants, but one that takes him and his ideas seriously. What we have to recognize is something quite different, that it is [a child's] effort to use words well, to say what he wants to say to people whom he trusts and wants to reach and move--that alone will teach a young person to use words better."

A teacher whom I know has done work in three of the schools in the worst slum areas of Philadelphia. She's been working with first graders. In one of these schools she has worked out an arrangement with the fifth grade teachers to allow one student at a time to come to each one of the first-grade classes as an observer and recorder; each of the students--ten-year-olds, eleven-year-olds--comes and spends the time looking at what is going on. Each has his own notebook in which he writes a diary of the class; no one saw these books except the child who wrote them and the teacher. They never went back up to the child's own classroom; they were never corrected; they were never graded. The change in language in these diaries over the course of just a few months was something.

I particularly remember one ghetto school boy who began repeating just one sentence--"I like door and the ball." Ten or twelve entries later he began using complex sentences. He was writing, and later he was doing good writing.

[Holt goes to the exemplum of Parliamentary Labor Party orators who, having had no formal schooling, had yet learned eloquence.] These men had become orators because they had to use words to get something across. It is enormously helpful to students if they hear language used well, if they get language used well in books, if they hear other people speaking well.

People who use language well haven't generally learned to use it well because all their mistakes were corrected. One learns from practice, not from school rules and grammar and so and so. What tends to happen in most schools is that we treat substandard English as if it were some kind of a social disease--and this is self-defeating.

OLSON: What we are dealing with here is not just the question of individual usage items, but the question of the school's responsibility to alternative dialects: the circumstances in which it *would be* desirable to acquire alternative dialects and the circumstances under which they *can* be acquired. I don't know if I've defined the problem correctly. Becker.

BECKER: As a linguist I have to rely on a colleague, William Labov of Columbia, who's made a very good study--further than I've even begun to go into social dialects, and his results seem to show that most of these dialect differences and irregularities--the lack of "correctness"--are very superficial things. They can be changed. So I think, technologically, there's no problem if you want to change the dialect of a child.

Then I have to step out of my role as linguist and ask, "Do I want to do that to that kid?" Do I want to change his dialect and in so doing say something about him and his world. I helped one student in college to make a change; and he doesn't talk like a Negro any more. I said, "Do you talk this way at home?" and he said, "No." He's changed. We've forced him to dye his skin white. We've forced him to change his language. That's part of his identity; it's part of my identity.

And so as a person, not a linguist, I say, don't do it. As a linguist, I say, it's possible.

MANOLAKES: I'd like to put this discussion back into the framework of the mission of the Tri-University Project, which, it seems to me, has to do with teacher education. I want to be sure I'm hearing right.

In my role as consultant to the schools, I find it very easy to detect what is wrong with them, but I am hard pressed for answers when people ask me what they should do about the schools. I guess I'd like to pose my question in this way. I think I hear people saying that structure is bad--or at least some degree of structure. Assuming that we are going to train teachers, can we define the *degree* of structure or the *kind* of structure which would be desirable in the classroom, or are people really saying that no structure is desirable?

Secondly, we were not responsive to Melvin Ezer's question about the role of the teacher. I think I'm hearing defined a kind of psycho-therapeutic approach--a detached impersonal approach to teaching. I think that Mr. Ezer was asking, "How do we fulfil the needs of the teacher who is also a human being, who is also involved, who is also confronting hostilities?" Now if we're talking of training teachers to be psychotherapists, I want to hear this. And I wish that we would talk about guiding principles, that this group of speakers and consultants might give us some guidance in organizing teacher-education programs which will propel those programs forward.

**OLSON:** Mr. Hess, would you like to speak to that point.

**HESS:** I wish I could. I think my stance on this is one of support for the point that Mr. Manolakes has made. I don't know what else I should say about what I take to be his position.

I see--or I think I see--a great difficulty in a system that does not have structure and at the same time attempts to train people to work in that system. Presumably a training program involves a certain amount of training teachers teaching skills or techniques, or strategies so that, in turn, they can deal with the children in the system. I don't see how a system can do without some structure or a sense of structure.

The question is, I suppose, "How much?" The other problem is that the techniques which have been applied in many instances are inappropriate; I don't think anybody would quarrel about that. It doesn't seem to me, however, that to cite incidents in which the techniques have been inappropriate really argues against the logic of an underlying structure which may only accidentally result in the use of an inappropriate technique. The educational system itself is designed to bring the young in a society to an adult level of competence. If we don't know quite what that adult competence is in every instance, we should be honest about it. But I do not feel one can take the position that a group of adults having experience, knowledge, and training have no more information about what should happen in a schoolroom than a seven or eight-year-old. I regard that as a little too extreme. It is not the kind of position that this sort of conference should espouse. Yet, I think that is the issue that's developed.

**OLSON:** If I may, as chairman, make one remark--a kind of demur at something Mr. Hess said. I don't think that we ought to feel at any point that this conference is taking a position. I would hope that we would feel that the conference is identifying a series of issues and that people are taking positions within the conference.

**HILLS:** I want to turn the discussion in a different direction; I don't quite know how to do it. I don't want to ask Dr. Oliver a whole series of questions, but some things that he said have bothered me, and I'd like to see if I can understand what he's driving at. At one point he said that sometimes the bizarre and the extreme have shock value; yet, I don't think that he was saying that the search for shock ought to be a major objective in an elementary curriculum. How would you apply anthropology to help kids in successive years--(whether the scheduling is right or wrong is beside the point)--when they have to look at the United States or primitive cultures, at Latin America, at Europe, at the Far East, at Africa, and so forth. You said that comparison is the method of the anthropologist; could you give us some questions that students could ask consistently so that they can make comparisons--coherent comparisons--across societies? You did do this partly as you talked about the cities; you gave a list of questions that would allow one to look at each city. Could you do anything of the like for societies? What are the important things to look for so that our kids develop a sense of structure and acquire some of the tools that you have been talking about, as they endeavor to assimilate a learning style and use it on their own.

**OLIVER:** Well, I propose to throw out the "eternal verity" words, like culture and value as being indefinable--in an operational sense. Even words like family and kinship cannot be defined broadly enough to be used for comparing all human societies. But there are some least-common denominators of behavior systems in the human animal. The human animal, being what he is, has a certain neurological organization, and a certain capability for existing within certain ranges of temperature; he has an extreme sexual dimorphism (that's a fancy way of saying that human males are more different from human females than are the males from the females among lots of species of animals we could mention). All of these capacities which are universal to the human animal create certain kinds of situations unique to the human species. Among the primates, man, and only man, has to solve the problem of the extreme difference between the male and the female of the species and the ever-ready accessibility of the human female to the male--whether he's a Bushman, an Eskimo, a ghetto dweller or a Park Avenue-ite. This extreme sexual dimorphism and accessibility of the female is a human situation which is truly pan-human, and hence studies aimed at exploring how various societies have attempted to solve the problems created by this situation are applicable to all human society.

The approach of which I speak was enunciated by Branislow Malinowski many many years ago; then it became unfashionable for awhile. It was given the name of functionalism. "Functionalism," in this sense, became unpopular and "structuralism" came into the picture, but now we're getting back to agreeing on the fact that one possible way of comparing all human societies is to look at the kinds of problems every human society has to solve and the vast range of ways in which they go about solving them.

I'm suggesting that, at first, in order to create healthy attitudes, you pick societies which solve their problems about equally well--certainly about as well as we solve them. That is so that there'll be no invidious comparisons implied as in "Savages are stupid; they don't do these things right."

But as the student develops a growing sophistication, I would introduce some valuation: i.e., if two societies live in the same kind of environment, and Society A has developed a technique for preserving food over the whole yearly cycle so that there are no starvation periods, whereas Society B hasn't, in my book Society A is "better" than Society B. I am inveighing against the extreme sentimentality of cultural relativism. All of this has to do with attitudes. While doing this kind of training in the making of comparisons having to do with differences in solutions to comparable problems, I would suggest that certain scientific techniques can be introduced to students, subtly or unsubtly.

As I listen to this discussion, I hear a certain amount of contempt expressed, contempt for the idea that education is learning to master a body of knowledge. Well, darn it, I think that there *is* a body of knowledge--that this 'body of knowledge' includes information which it is useful and valuable that children in our society know about other societies as well as about their own. I don't care whether you pick Eskimo or Bushmen or Andaman Islanders for the formation of your attitudes toward societies, when you are talking about *problems* and *solutions* various societies can be used. But I think that there have been certain great events that have happened in human history, and that at some point in the child's education he ought to know something about these. For instance, a child ought to be able to identify himself as a human, as opposed to a non-human animal; he ought to know a little something about the interrelationship between his biological make-up and his capacity to acquire different kinds of cultural traits; he ought to know something about the vast changes that came about as a result of food *production*--namely the neolithic revolution.

But to balance this concern with technology so that he will not fall into the trap of historical determinism, he ought to also be told about the enormous changes that have come about in human societies as a result of an *idea*, say the hallucinations of a Mohammed.

There are certain pan-human events that children should ultimately know about, but they can't know everything about every society. There are at least 2000 significantly culturally distinct societies in the world today; it is silly to expect coverage of all the societies.

A child is a product of Western Civilization. And certain epochal events have taken place within Western Civilization. I think at some point or another it would not be sinful to have a child acquire a body of information about these epochal events.

Finally, there are certain "construals of facts" [here Oliver is thinking of studies of cognitive styles and systems of logic prominent] in various cultures such as those of Lévi-Strauss] that I would like the child to know about. I'd like him to look at the ways in which 'other men' construe events in order to realize that we Western men don't have the only answers. Moreover, starting at an earlier period in a child's life, I'd like to use anthropological comparative studies, including studies from our own society: these will help him to live in his own community and will also help him to understand some of the techniques of our own system of logic which, willy-nilly, we are more or less committed to in a technical sense: that is, western scientific logic.

**HUNT:** I think tonight that, for the first time, I fully understand the issue between people in mental health and people in education. The issue involves chiefly the degree to which the mental health people are concerned with the individual learner--the person going through the learning operation. The educator's concern is for the body of knowledge, for getting it across. Since about 1956 I've been going through an evolution, turning more and more toward the learner. We are not going to resolve the argument about 'structure' here. You're going to have to have some structure, of course, but are you going to let the structure dominate the kid? Is it going to be a Procrustean bed on which every kid's legs are chopped off if he doesn't fit it? That is what we have been doing, in many cases.

I happen now to be visiting elementary schools. When I walk in, all the heads turn my way to "see the visitor." They do that in most of what are called 'traditional-schools,' where everybody has been looking at the teacher most of the time and listening to the same old stuff for a long time. When new people come in, they have all the effect of novelty; all heads turn. Then the teacher tries to bring them back, and the first thing you know, she's screeching in the process. Don't tell me it doesn't occur. I hear it, with my own ears, repeatedly. Now this does not occur in those classrooms where the kids are operating.

You, [Mr. Manolakes] asked for principles. I think the chief principles here would be to put as much as possible of the burden on the student for the learning, for the choice of learning and for the setting of goals, today, this week and next week.

With respect to Professor Oliver's point: it seems to me that values should go into the curriculum. Most of you know Richard Suchman's techniques of 'inquiry training.' He trains children to ask questions through introducing an element of surprise. He hooks kids by presenting them with a three-minute picture of the collapsing varnish can. A little water is poured in the varnish can; the can is heated on a bunsen burner; the steam comes out; the can is corked, put down, ice water is poured over it; the can collapses. Then Suchman gets the kids to asking questions. This can be done with anthropological things. As a matter of fact I used to start my course in social psychology (and I bet you it can be done in fifth grade) with anthropological episodes. I think that Suchman could have made films of anthropological episodes and used them in a value curriculum.

OLSON: Mr. Kohl.

KOHL: Just something about the values. There's a great discrepancy in our society between what we say we are and what we are. One thing that I think that we must face--taking the question of teaching values one step further--is that we certainly haven't been able to teach democracy very successfully--if you look throughout our nation--and equality and all of those nice things that we're supposed to be teaching in the schools. It just doesn't work. Look around. Look around everyday. Look at what's happening in society.

I think one of the things that I am trying to say is that one doesn't teach democracy by talking about it; one doesn't get children to understand what it is to be participating-as-an-equal in a social process by telling him that that is what you're doing with him. And one of the things that I think that underlies what I have been talking about is that I hope, with the kids, to make some of those myths about what our society is all about, real. The only way we can make them real is by changing ourselves and by letting things happen in the classroom which make them real, actually functioning things.

OLSON: Mr. Kaltsounis. I think we'll have to make this the last question.

KALTSOUNIS: I hope I won't be too long. You know I'm an adopted son of this great country and I'm very proud of it and I'm fascinated with this country everyday. Some people tonight I felt expressed hostility toward what the speakers said because they felt that what they said was already done a long time ago and so on. Personally, I was very intrigued with what happened today and I'll tell you why. I grew up in Europe. When I was in school in Europe, I was under a very rigid curriculum and administration. And when I was teaching, the Minister of Education knew exactly at ten o'clock, October 24, what I was doing--400 miles away from where he was. Now I came to this country for one year, I was in social studies, and I found things in the colleges here and in the schools exciting and fascinating. As a matter of fact, the schools looked to me the way you, Mr. Holt, and you, Mr. Kohl, described them as properly being. Even you, Mr. Becker, and Mr. Hunt.

I studied with Richard Suchman in Illinois. I was very pleased with what he was doing; what he was doing is not any different from what Dewey said ought to be done in his descriptions of the problem-solving process, from what so many of the others had done or had said ought to be done in the educational literature which I was exposed to.

Then a sad period came. People like Rickover and a fellow by the name of Bestor, a fellow by the name of Hutchins--wrote books and they gave a lot of speeches. Then Sputnik came, and all these fellows were circling along with the Sputnik up there. They were telling everybody in the United States that things are pretty bad; we have to become rigid; we have to become subject-centered. We have to have what the Soviets have--what they *had* had (they changed in 1958); we have to do what the Europeans are doing in order to advance ourselves and catch up with the Russians. And so we did move toward rigidity, centering in subjects and so forth. For me this was a very disappointing thing. If the generals had not taken over Greece this year, I probably would've gone back. You people today, you people come here and argue for the things that "tried to catch on" before the Sputnik reaction came and made people throw them out. What do we do now to push back the people who have demanded that we seek for structure, more rigidity; the books are out, and they are being read quite a lot and all of the popular magazines reprint articles by these people.

/No one really rose to this challenge./

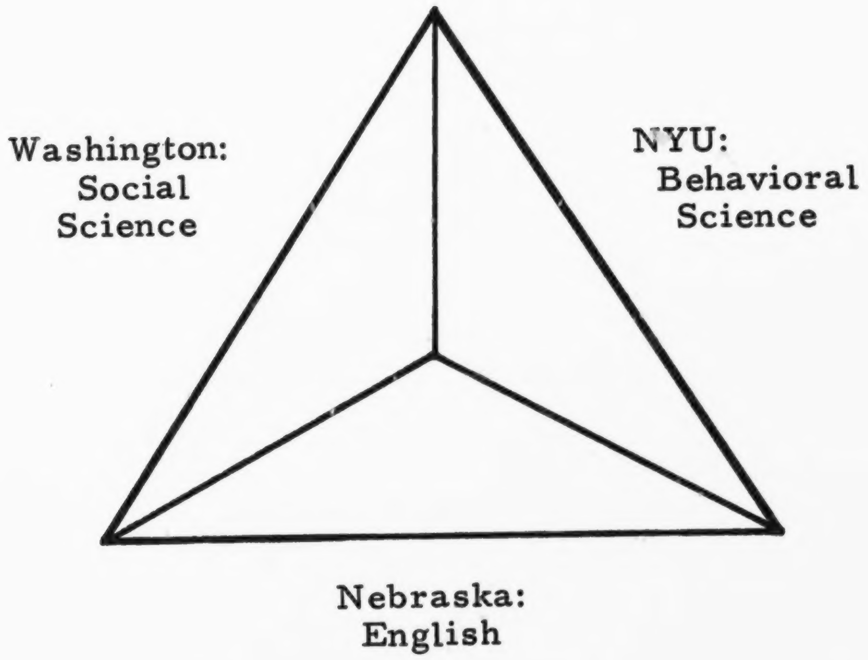
MILAZZO: (Closing remarks): First of all, I'd like to make some observations: my first observation is that for a conference that has had as much input on language and communication as we have had, we've had one hell of a ball trying to make points clear. I think that's the kind of a process that we all have to go through.

My answer to Mr. Kaltsounis' question would be that the fact that this Tri-University Project is in existence is a recognition of the level at which we can make a major attack in teacher education. If there are going to be changes in the schools, if we are going to have any major impact on what's going to happen in them, we have to do a better job with teachers in preparation. The key to education is the training of the teacher prepared to handle a flexible classroom, and you're going to be looked at on a nationwide basis in terms of this opportunity.

REED: (Closing remarks): Of the topics that have been discussed today, the only one in which I have any competence is language and usage. A very interesting approach to the problem of the valuation of the surface of the language is underway in England (it's a project that's going to take a very long time to complete), a survey of usage at various social and regional levels conducted by the linguist, Randolph Quirk, and others. He announced at one time, early in the planning of the project, that he was interested in finding out "What people say," "What they think they say," and "What they think they ought to say." The answer I gave before was a little thin in that I seemed only to be thinking of what people actually say. It is certainly true that we need to educate people as to what attitudes exist in society as to the speech patterns which they use. From that point on, I suppose it's up to the child to decide what he wants to do with this information.

## THE COMMITTEE REPORTS

## THE TRI-UNIVERSITY PROJECT FOR ELEMENTARY EDUCATION


Washington: Social Science
NYU: Behavioral Science
Nebraska: English

I. The Study of Behavior, the Study of Society, and the Elementary School:

    A. The Teacher: "The Style of a Good Teacher and How to Develop It"

    B. The Student: "Society and Intelligence"

    C. The School: "Teaching Strategies: Inductive Teaching; The Social Sciences and English"

II. The Study of Behavior and the Study of Language

    "Dialects and Learning"

III. The Study of Language and the Study of Social Differences

    "The Oral and the Written Language"

IV. The Study of Society and Imaginative Creation

    "Myth and Story and the Elementary School Child"

# I.

## The Study of Behavior, the Study of Society and the Elementary School

A. The Teacher: "The Style of a Good Teacher and How to Develop It": Group VI

B. The Student: "Society and Intelligence": Group III

C. The School: "Teaching Strategies: Inductive Teaching; The Social Sciences and English": Group IV

[The papers in this section are committee reports having to do with what happens between student and teacher in the classroom and how each is prepared by society and by formal educational institutions for the confrontation in the classroom. The committees say fairly new things about how teachers might be selected and trained in this country. They might be trained to take into account the kind of teaching which goes on in the home. The committees 'put their stamp of approval' on the assumption that intelligence can be changed--an assumption which accepted would change radically certain segments of the American educational industry and which might reshape teaching methodology. And they said that research in learning, concept development, and so forth--has had *little effect* on the way we teach, an assertion which, if true, is regrettable to say the least. But the reports speak for themselves.]

# THE STYLE OF A GOOD TEACHER AND HOW TO MAKE ONE

## Group VI

"What should be the relationship between the school's teaching style and that of the home or social setting from which the child comes? What kinds of elementary school classrooms require what kinds of authority in the teacher?"

Our discussions did, to some degree, set forth the characteristics of a successful teacher; that is, we asked the question, "What are the characteristics of a successful teacher?" And this afternoon, working with Mr. Holt and Mr. Kohl, we began to describe actual characteristics: for example, Mr. Kohl suggested that one characteristic of a successful teacher might be his capacity to lose his identity as an "authority figure" (so that students could begin to move about physically and intellectually without his constant direction). Perhaps one reason we may not see more of willingness on the part of the teachers we train to lose, in the classroom, the mask of the authority-figure which their roles give them is that we, as teachers-of-teachers, do not turn our students loose to assume independence in our classes and to take responsibility for establishing the directions in which they should go, that we are always telling them what they should do instead of letting them experience. Mr. Holt remarked how often--and this does relate to the other idea of losing identity--all of us as human beings have a fear of losing control; perhaps a characteristic of a successful teacher is that he does not have this fear. Mr. Kohl had a list of features which he felt to be characteristic of a good teacher--a sense of humor; a certain humility; a great flexibility (that is, a capacity to devise a great many alternatives for handling virtually any given situation); a willingness to forego the compulsion to correct constantly (if there is correcting needed, he sometimes will wait for a more appropriate situation); a capacity to be fast on his feet. As Mr. Kohl sees it, teaching is a dynamic business.

Another person in the discussion group suggested that, from her experience, she had found that youngsters are very happy when you give them a chance to say or write what they think; perhaps this would be a characteristic of a good teacher too--that he does give the student some voice.

Then we said to ourselves, "All right, let us assume that these are the characteristics of a first-rate teacher, then what can be done to develop this kind of teacher?" And we said some interesting things, things which have to do with matters other than course work. Persons who are preparing to be teachers and who have never taught should have more experiences with youngsters in a variety of situations--situations perhaps where they are placed not in an authoritarian position, situations such as tutoring which require patient human contact (Mr. Tenor talked about perhaps developing the SNEA program so that the students can set up their own programs for learning to teach and can evaluate and share their experiences within these programs). People going into education should consistently have, figuratively speaking, "windows" from which they can watch youngsters enjoying themselves, "windows" looking out on scenes where youngsters are truly involved, where nothing 'artificial' enters in; the teacher-in-preparation should not be at this figurative "window" to direct but to observe and occasionally to help or to supervise kids in a casual way. Such experiences might allow the student preparing to teach a chance to mirror himself in the actions of the children so that he might then decide what additional experiences would help him. As he works, we should work with him--as he sizes up the experiences which he has had and tries to plot which academic courses he wishes to take. And it might be worth our while to start--or interrupt--our teacher education programs with an encounter--the window--between kids and teacher-to-be and then ask the teacher-to-be to turn back toward us--the college and university--to pick for himself the courses and the other exercises which will prepare him for the 'long life's work' with kids-in-schools.

Mr. Kohl also came up at this point with some other experiences which might be useful to people going into teaching. He suggested that we should get training-center students to work with actual materials, giving them all of the materials which they can get of every sort, conventional and unconventional, allowing them to "mess around" with them; and then, after they've messed around with them and gotten to work and 'play' with them, they might go to a 'clinic' where perhaps they would work with one child or one adult and with the materials which they poked around in or with others they've made. Then they might go into groups. And as they cut the cord tying them to alma mater, they might be given more chance, than they presently are getting, to get into the community in which they are going to teach, to really get into it. For instance, they might go into some kind of seminar, a seminar where there are also people from the community where such issues as child development or community affairs and power struggles are discussed.

Finally, we all seemed to agree that students who are asked to look at teaching or at kids don't know how to observe. The business of observation is a business of assessing, but as important as the job of assessing outward is--looking at what others are doing, the business of assessing inward may be more important, learning the poise and the honesty to talk about the teaching bobbles one makes sensitively and without self-abuse, on the one hand, or cynicism on the other. And this kind of looking at what one is and can be, in connection with the help of the trainers-of-teachers and the college or university from which one graduates, should continue at least into the first three or four years of the person's teaching experience.

Reporter: Jack Sheridan
University of Washington Participant

# THE ISSUES:
# TEACHING STYLE IN THE SCHOOL AND IN THE HOME

## Group VI

Issue No. 1: We felt the crucial problem in Teacher-Education programs to be the selection of teachers-to-be; how does one do it effectively?

Issue No. 2: Related to Issue No. 1 was the problem of identifying the characteristics of a good teacher and of good teaching; good teaching obviously implies learning.

Issue No. 3: A critical task of teacher-education is that of sensitizing prospective teachers to the process of introducing the young child to the school situation; what differing approaches for introducing students to classes are appropriate to differing locales and subcultural groups?

Issue No. 4: What are the implications of grouping for teaching styles? Are there types of groups which will enable individuals who are 'bent' a certain way (by the mores of their group or by their personal 'disposition') to function with greater effectiveness than would other groups?

Issue No. 5: The group wondered whether the gaps in the educational process today do not reside in the areas of social and cultural competencies. What aspects of teacher-education might function to help close these particular gaps?

Issue No. 6: What is the role of the non-professional--the paraprofessional--in the classroom; what should be his relationship to the professional teacher?

## SOCIETY AND INTELLIGENCE

### Group III

The first question our group raised had to do with the validity of a series of assumptions: intelligence is 'subject to learning' rather than being static and unchanging; it is multidimensional rather than unitary; environmental exposure is a factor in developing it. Our question was: To what extent are these assumptions about intelligence valid from the standpoint of what psychologists can tell us about learning and intelligence? We asked ourselves "Is there a single theoretical definition of intelligence?" and answered more or less flatly: "No." We said a great many different things in trying to define intelligence, standard definitions such as, "Intelligence is the ability to profit from environment." One of our group, Professor Ronning, called it the storage of information and the retrieval of that information at the appropriate time. This storage and retrieval system is not a static system Clearly information *is* stored in the central nervous system. The question of central importance concerns how a dynamic system which permits at the same time continual accretion of information and simultaneous retrieval of relevant material required for a particular situation operates. Such a system might be described as depending upon rote recall, upon divergent thinking, upon problem solving ability or a variety of other terms. Unfortunately a firm conception of the operation of such a system does not yet exist. Other equally tentative explanations were also offered. We were aware that "intelligence" as measured by present tests is no more than a predictor of scholastic success, ability to handle what the school asks, and that such tests, based on the values and system of the dominant culture, are culturally biased and do not measure innate ability. Hence, some of our group suggested that the school, rather than using intelligence tests, develop a variety of tests which do measure potential ability to perform in *various areas of accomplishment*. Such tests would substitute for the single IQ test. As we looked at the matter, we also came up against Piaget's insistence that there are qualitative differences in "IQ" as well as quantitative ones across the age levels, but this assumption was questioned by some members of the group (who did not agree with Piaget's hypothesis).

At one point, Joe McVicker Hunt came into our group and presented research evidence that environment does, indeed, change intelligence, both at the animal, and at the human, level--evidence which showed, with animals, that actual physical changes in the brain structure of the animal can be brought about by changes in the environment. Guilford's work at Southern California on the structure of intellect was mentioned; and it was generally accepted that the elementary school does not presently develop many aspects of 'intelligence', but among those which it could develop further are the capacity for 'social' and 'creative' behavior, and the capacity for divergent thinking. The group seemed to believe that present elementary schools place a heavy emphasis on skills, on verbal behavior, and on conforming behavior.

The assumptions that intelligence can be changed, that it is 'subject to learning', and that environmental exposure is a factor in developing it were assumptions which the group viewed as confirmed The question then became "What does accepting these assumptions imply for the educational community and the job of preparing teachers?"

We discussed the possibility that the selecting of candidates for the profession might be done by seeking out people who would accept and work with these assumptions; but it was pointed out with some melancholy and agreed upon generally that no present predictors or selectors accurately select people who 'fit into the classroom'. Recognizing that tests do not and may not ever do the weeding out job, some members of our group suggested that, once students are in pre-service programs in teacher-education, considerably more guidance than is presently available may be needed to help these teachers-in-training along the way. It may be necessary to move the teacher-in-training out of teacher-education as he gives evidence of peculiarities--traits--which suggest that he is not likely to be effective in the classroom or responsive to the assumptions listed above.

As to pre-service training it was observed that teachers-in-training need a kind of encounter which makes the 'methods' course more relevant. The fifth-year program was suggested--perhaps a teacher needs to know more than can be taught in four years or needs the extra year toward maturity; perhaps more emphasis needs to be given to educational psychology--more work with the practical application of learning theory to teaching and the diagnosing of learning difficulties.

To accept intelligence as changeable is to be flexible in a fairly profound sense, but all too often the teacher-in-training does not encounter a flexible curriculum, responsive teachers and so forth in the college. Much was said about how one builds flexibility into one's style of dealing with the undergraduate on the assumption that, if teachers are expected to be more flexible in dealing with children, so also colleges ought to be more flexible in dealing with teachers. In dealing with such a nebulous problem as "flexibility," our thought was not so much to change the program of teacher-education by adding new courses or subtracting old ones, but rather to offer in the teacher education program good models to teachers--examples of what good teaching really is in the college courses for teachers in preparation. Moreover, in a research enterprise it might be possible to isolate successful elementary teachers; to find out from them 'what it was that' was most valuable in the education courses, the 'methods' courses, and the other courses which they had taken which 'made them good teachers', a study which rightly carried forward might give us suggestions as to what to emphasize and what to omit in present training programs.

The word most often-used in our discussion was flexibility--we wanted flexibility built into the undergraduate program, a flexibility which would not require of every student preparing for teaching the very same courses and credits as all other students before he would be eligible for student teaching. We wanted to send the student teacher out when it seemed that he was competent and ready for student teaching, not when he had taken X number of courses. We wanted a flexible elementary school curriculum which accepts the assumptions of our position on intelligence. We wanted the opportunity for flexibility which might be granted by a changing of the perceived expectations of parents, pupils, school board, administration, etc. as to what the elementary school should be (sometimes our perceptions are incorrect concerning the restrictive mythos of the community). We wanted flexibility in curricular changes--not necessarily a changing of the subject matter studied--say from an emphasis upon the home and local environment to a studying of Japan or other distant cultures; we wanted curriculum changes which focused on important logical operations or logical-synthetic operations rather than on a rote treatment of, say, the important exports of a country. We wanted a curriculum which pays attention to individual differences rather than paying lip service to them, a curriculum which offers self-fulfillment. Most of all, we wanted a curriculum which recognizes what 'intelligence' is--i. e. its complex nature and the capacity of human creation and of environment to change it.

Reporter: Roger Zimmerman
University of Washington Participant

# TEACHING STRATEGIES: INDUCTIVE TEACHING; THE SOCIAL SCIENCES AND ENGLISH

## Group IV

In our group, we initially identified a series of problems for consideration. Our first problem was a problem of getting clear about words--what is an 'inductive approach' to teaching, what a 'deductive approach', particularly in areas other than the sciences? What are the philosophical-psychological and other assumptions which lie behind each approach? (These must be identified if one is to evaluate the effectiveness of each method as it is used, and in asking these questions, we asked "What is the point of teaching?") And what adaptations in either an inductive or a deductive approach to teaching need to be made for the special needs of individual students and of teachers, depending on the circumstances in which teachers and students find themselves in the classroom and also on their personal styles? All of these matters bear on the question of how 'concepts' are formed: we needed usable definitions of 'concepts', a clear picture of the strategies developed for shaping concepts, and a picture of the bearing of the selection of concepts in the creation of a curriculum on curriculum development itself. In short, our problems were:

1) What are the philosophical, psychological, and other assumptions which lie behind the various methods of teaching and approaches to learning which have currency in this country?

2) What adaptations need to be made to meet the special needs of pupils or of teachers?

3) What bearing do teaching methods and approaches to learning have on concept formation?

    a) What bearing does the general approach to teaching and learning selected have on the kinds of concepts developed, the ways in which they are developed, and the time of their development?

    b) What teaching strategies should be perfected in a teacher's repertory if he is to employ any particular general approach with skill?

    c) What are the ramifications of any particular understanding of cognitive development or of learning for curriculum development?

4) What research evidence is there to guide the decisions which teachers may make regarding approches to teaching and learning?

One member of the group raised strong objections to the problem as stated on the agenda: "I don't want problems stated for me. These are not my problems. We should generate the problems ourselves." We did not have time to discuss any of the problems adequately.

In trying to display to ourselves what an inductive approach might imply in the non-scientific areas, we made an effort to define the problem operationally: the illustrations accepted by the group had to do with Shakespeare. In a deductive teaching situation, the teacher might say, "Shakespeare is a writer who displays situations in which all men find themselves." This would be his generalization; he and his student might then proceed to discover the problems, in a play that deals with 'problems', which are both current problems and the problems of many men in many cultures, teaching thus becoming a process of defending generalizations whose truth is 'already known' to the teacher and whose truth is mediated to the student by the process of defense. An inductive approach to Shakespeare would go to the play; teacher and student together would examine the actions of the characters, their plights and so forth. Out of such an examination of particulars in the plays and in the world outside of the play might come some such a generalization as we have elicited, but it would not be 'already known' when the study began. The particulars from the play would have to be organized and categorized with particulars from real life in our time and in other times to give rise to the generalization; the deductive approach thus moves from the general statement to its support in detail, the inductive approach--from the specific detail to the probing for the generalization.

We asked ourselves then if what is fashionably called reflective thinking is really only another name for inductive thinking; reflective teaching, only another name for inductive teaching. At the hypothesis-making level reflective teaching may be inductive; at the hypothesis testing level, it may be deductive. Some discussants suggested that what we have called 'reflective teaching' could be used or misused, could become deductive teaching if the student is always furnished a hypothesis which turns out always also to be the right answer. The crucial question may be "How much and which of the thinking processes are in the hands of the students; how much and which processes are handled by the teacher in the ordinary classroom?" The group was concerned with the fact that a large body of knowledge on concept development and its relation to hypothesis formation, i.e., the work of Piaget and Bruner, has had little impact to date on the development of teaching strategies. Hilda Taba's recent work on children's thinking has been an important contribution but it needs to be greatly expanded and developed in research which is carefully designed and systematically carried out.

An entirely different view of the learning process from that of Piaget or Bruner or Taba is to be found in the S-R approach, the behavioristic approach, best exemplified in the Skinnerian learning theories and in programmed instruction schedules. Such programs, too, have a place in the instructional program (though the conference took little note of it). In short, there was serious disagreement about the points identified above (1, 2, 3, a, b, c). One member refused to recognize the validity of a 'Skinnerian' approach, labeling it "purely behavioristic." He suggested an approach to learning which would encourage "reflective thinking" but seemed, at least to some members of the conference, unable to define the "reflective approach" more precisely or in terms of teaching strategies.

There was also strong disagreement about the role of the school, the role of curricula of various kinds, and the role of the teacher in determining what should happen in the classroom. One member of the group felt that only the "personal problems of the children" should form the basis of a curriculum. Most others felt that "problems" ought to have some social significance and that the school had a definite responsibility for curriculum planning to prevent a needless repetition of topics and to insure an increase in the quality and complexity of learning. At the beginning of this discussion the group was divided into two camps, each supporting one of the two extremes. Toward the end of the discussion, some 'sense of the meeting' arose, the general sense that schools should have some sort of curriculum and that a curriculum should have some decernible structure.

Reporters: Ambrose Clegg
James Hills
University of Washington Participants

## II.

## The Study of Behavior and the Study of Language

A. "Dialect and Learning": Group I

B. "Language Learning, Social Structure and Children": Appendix I

C. "Dialects: Reading and Writing": Appendix II

[The papers in this section, all of which come from members of Group I, explore the relationship between socio-linguistic problems and learning problems. What is perhaps most striking about the committee's reports is its sense of how very little we know in the area. What is almost equally striking is the committee's proper sense that sensible action--even revolutionary action in this area--is possible apart from final research knowledge.]

# DIALECTS AND LEARNING

## Group I

Do dialectal differences--particularly those dialectal differences commonly regarded by the powerful, the censorious, etc., as constituting a non-standard pattern and labeling a person as an outsider--constitute a hindrance to a child's attempts to learn in school; and if they are a hindrance, to what extent do they hinder? Professor David Reed began the discussion asserting that there is no real experimental evidence as yet which would permit us to answer the question: there are conjectures and experiments. The essential arguments which seemed to come to the fore in this discussion are as follows: dialectal differences in themselves are really not so important as are considerations having to do with what people believe, think, and feel about the dialectal differences. Dialect becomes a block which hinders a child's learning as it becomes a token which encourages people to judge him in a negative or contemptuous fashion. Indeed, there was some discussion to the effect that the whole matter of dialect differences as an important factor in American education has been exaggerated; some recent studies by William Labov have shown that dialectal differences in the United States separating region from region and group from group tend to be minimal. Mr. Kohl suggested that dialectal differences blur, and that differentiated forms of a language tend to move toward a norm, accepted by the 'separated partners' when there is a constructive social interaction between them. Social interaction in itself, in his opinion, mitigates the problems in communication created by differences in dialect and even to bring the differentiated forms together--to move them toward common forms. Non-standard dialects then would appear to cripple a child's learning to the extent that his teachers see these dialects (and hence the child) as unworthy.

We do need more evidence regarding whether differences of dialect--as between a student and teacher or between a reading book and its reader--really do block communications and therefore learning. Not everyone in the group agreed that dialect differences *per se did not* make the difference and some people expressed the feeling that the 'prestige dialect' is a real entity, that some youngsters will have many problems when they emerge from the schools if they do not learn this prestige language and/or do not want to learn it. But *if* children *do* need to learn a prestige dialect--and we did not all agree that they should--we felt that *how a youngster is made to perceive the 'prestige dialect'*--how he accepts the fact that he needs to learn it--is the crucial factor in whether his encounter with it helps or hinders his learning in other areas.

Reporter: Margot Ely
New York University

Appendix I:

## LANGUAGE LEARNING, SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND CHILDREN

### Group I

Our major question was: "What do we know and what does the teacher need to know about the relationships between caste, dialect and language-learning?" One sub-question was: "Should the teaching of a second dialect be started early and be intensive?" Our group felt that the most important dimension of this question concerned the acceptance of the child's dialect: if the child's dialect is accepted--respected (in other words, if the child is accepted)--the child will be more likely to make progress in learning the language. We can have an early intensive program that works with the child's own language. But our work must take on the important dimension of acceptance; we accept a child early--our acceptance is intensive. By 'intensive' teaching was meant teaching through which the child realizes his individual worth as he uses his dialect. It means that the teacher avoids the use of materials that tend to reject the child's dialect. Or, if it is necessary to use such materials, 'excuses' (notes the expediency of) these materials to the children. It means that the teacher uses a language experience approach in which records of the same diction--the same grammar--as the children use become materials of instruction. The use of standard spelling in these materials, on the other hand, was recommended.

It was felt that if the child learns to read his own dialect he may automatically learn to read the "standard" written dialect. But if his oral dialect is not accepted, it is very possible he will not learn to read the standard written dialect. It may very well be that "acceptance-of-dialect" would involve talking with the children about different dialects. This does not mean, however, that the teacher has to use a dialect different from the one which he regularly uses. In other words, he does not have to prove to the child that he knows another dialect. He keeps his standard dialect; he keeps it as a 'model', a model for the child in the classroom. Thus, if the teacher tapes stories for the children, these stories would be read in standard dialect.

Our second sub-question: "Should the teaching of a second dialect be started early and be intensive?" dealt with the question of whether or not the language lab (audio-lingual-systematic-direct approach--whatever terminology is used) should be the approach employed. Questions were raised as to whether the time spent on such a systematic, direct approach to teaching a second dialect is justifiable. It was generally felt that such materials should not be overlooked as a means of teaching a child a second dialect. The critical questions centered around the staging of the program: "If the approach should not be overlooked, at what time should it be looked at? When the child is four? six? nine? eleven? at what particular age?" Our answer to this question tended to be not an answer at all but a series of opinions, assertions, and considerations.

Reporter: Patrick Groff
University of Nebraska Participant

## Appendix II:

# DIALECTS: READING AND WRITING

## Group I

We were concerned with the effect of dialectal differences on the development of reading and writing skills. Since there is no experimental evidence concerning the problem, our approach to it had to be tentative, but it was the judgment of the group that speaking a non-standard dialect might delay or puzzle a child--that exposure to more than one dialect in or out of the school might also slow up the learning of reading. We could not agree as to whether dialect is a major factor in blocking learning.

To what degree is it necessary to insist that only one dialect be used in the classroom? If communication and understanding by the pupil of that teacher and by pupils of one another is possible, why should one bother? Within our society marked differences in patterns of culture exist; we all know with Auden "that we must love one another or die." The acceptance of difference may imply an acceptance of dialect variations; certainly we do not *know* that it is desirable to try to lead a child to a standard dialect. *The choice of what dialect to speak should be the child's, and he should be placed under no coercion*. Such a position would imply a radical alteration of the position of most Americans with respect to usage.

Yet perhaps that position too is overstated. The reasons for learning a standard dialect may be important; the goal may be important; and the opportunity for learning it should be provided if the child so chooses. But since there is no limit to the vocabulary of any dialect, since all have equal expressive power, the choice which the child or the student makes has to be made on grounds other than linguistic ones: the limitations in social mobility imposed by dialect, limits on job opportunities, the desire to retain cultural ties and to enhance cultural loyalty and so forth. It should be recognized that at some level anyone who tries to impose a change in dialect on a student is also trying to impose a change in culture; anyone who allows for a social interaction between groups separated by cultural or economic or regional differentiation is also allowing for the smoothing out of dialectal differentiation.

If the teacher is to be competent when there is a dialectal difference, he needs to be trained to a new kind of linguistic awareness but also to a new kind of awareness of what makes up the nature of differences between cultures. That is, the trained teacher must be trained to be competent to understand both *culture* and *language* so as to minimize both his problem of understanding the child who speaks a dialect other than his own and his problem of accepting him; the degree to which there is in the classroom a merging of the dialect of teacher and pupil may well be a factor in learning.

How do we establish patterns of acceptance? Regarding reading methodology, Mr. Kohl made the point that teachers should have courses in all systems of reading instruction from which they may choose for individual children, that is, choosing the system of reading instruction which fits the individual child, doing the analysis basic to deciding which reading approach fits which child is part of the act of acceptance. As we looked to see how we might accept, we considered whether teachers should read previous anecdotal records on children and there was no agreement on this topic.

What is the critical deterrent to learning to read? It may be the child's feeling about school as a place where he is rejected rather than anything that has to do primarily with dialect, but an accurate "language-experience" recording of the child's dialect may help him in learning to read. In such recording, standard English spelling should be used, but the wording which the child dictates should not be changed.[1] And language-experience techniques for teaching dialects were not the only ones discussed; we asked ourselves, "Are some methods more applicable to teaching students who speak a non-standard dialect and handling classrooms in which dialectal divergence appears than others?" (An experiment might be undertaken by the Tri-University Project, actual teaching of children by project participants to discover what reading techniques do what for what children speaking which of the 'kinds' of English.)

With respect to dialects-and-composition, dialects-and-literature: Mr. Kohl plunked for the use of literature written in dialects indigenous to the child.

And we all said that a child's writing should be generally based on (1) what he reads; (2) the way he speaks; and (3) what he hears when he listens to the mother tongue. The decorum of use of dialect in composition depends on the purpose of writing; it differs according to contexts say from the business letter to the poem; but if the mother's dialect, the home's dialect, is accepted, the child may well have a better chance of learning something in elementary school

Reporter: Blanche Persky
New York University

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[1] Someone asked whether it is justifiable and profitable to pay children to learn; the group said that this should not be done directly. It did say that it would be profitable to provide things for children to do which will earn them money and also motivate them toward effective learning--productive, real work. Within the next ten years, reading problems may be less crucial as the community beyond the school and its attitude drive home the need to read and provide the tools.

## III.

## The Study of Language and the Study of Social Difference

### "The Oral and the Written Language"

/̲Written English, at least its spelling, is not subject to variation across social and regional units; the oral language is. The relationship between the "written dialect" and the structures peculiar to it in its most sophisticated form and the oral language in its chameleon colors has never been really thoroughly studied. Group V could not 'study' the matter in a few breathless hours. It could indicate where ignorance lives. It could ask the root questions as to what are the facts and propose a range of policy decisions radical enough to "keep children from play and old men from the chimney corner." Can we really entertain the notion that we no longer need to teach children to read?/̲7

# THE ORAL AND THE WRITTEN LANGUAGE

## Group V

Discussion Group V concerned itself with the general topic of the ways in which the elementary school classroom oral language patterns are or might be related to written language patterns. The discussion ranged widely, and freely, yet the kinds of questions considered can be fairly organized into two classes--questions of fact and questions of policy. Concerning the first, questions of fact, the collective resources of the discussants consistently indicated the need either for wider reading of existing research or for a great deal more research: it seemed important to us to have answers to the following questions, and to the best of our knowledge, answers are not presently available:

First, what is the correspondence between standard English spelling and various dialect phonologies? Do reading problems arise in one dialect area and not in others because of differences in phonemic-graphemic relationships? Do some graphemes lend themselves more readily to learning to read than others, and does this vary from dialect to dialect? One of the discussants suggested that perhaps the current research of William Labov of Columbia University might begin to answer some of these questions, and another suggested that the work of Hugh Rudorf of the University of Maryland might also be relevant here.

Second, how do the variations in phonemic-graphemic correspondences from dialect to dialect bear on spelling problems? Are there particular kinds of spelling problems peculiar to particular dialect areas because of the absence of close correlation? Again the work of Labov and of Rudorf may point to some answers, or perhaps at least define the question somewhat more narrowly.

Third, how do syntactic differences between a given spoken dialect and (recognizing the problems of this phrase) the standard written English bear on reading problems? Are there such differences? Do they account for any reading problems?

Fourth, would there be any measurable difference in the rapidity with which basic reading skills were acquired if a child's first reader were a direct transcription of his spoken dialect? It was suggested that one might even make individual readers by transcribing, for the student to read, stories or poems or anecdotes which the student himself had recorded. The group seemed to feel, fairly unanimously, that his reading his composition or another's while he is simultaneously listening to it being read on a tape recorder, whether by the teacher (in her dialect pattern) or by a student (with a dialect pattern similar to that of the student reading), would measurably facilitate the acquisition of reading skills: this too would seem to be a subject for research.

Finally, it was suggested that the model of geographical dialects in the spoken language might usefully be applied to research in the written language. Under questioning, consultant Alton Becker asserted that the paragraphing experiments which he and Richard Young and others have conducted at the Center for Research in Language and

Language Behavior at Ann Arbor, Michigan, would seem to indicate that the model of geographical dialects might indeed be useful for understanding the written language. He stated that the experiments had been run using deparagraphed passages of several different kinds of writing; while the subjects in the experiment seemed to locate the approximate paragraph breaks with similar facility in all the kinds of writing used, they did not seem to do so on the same bases in each kind of writing. The clues by which paragraph breaks were identified seemed to differ between kinds. One might speak of this as like differences in geographical dialects; that is, if widely separated spoken dialects such as Gullah and the Yorkshire dialect are characterized by a distinctive lexicon, phonological, morphological, and syntactic system, so in this case different kinds of writing (different "written dialects") might be said to be characterized by distinctive paragraph systems. It seems possible, further, that they might similarly be characterized in terms of distinctive lexical and syntactic systems. Only extensive further research can determine whether or not the model is fruitful, though.

In addition to the questions on which the group indicated that answers from research were necessary, there were also questions which required, in effect, policy decisions. On each of these questions there was represented in the group--only nine people--nearly as many different shades of opinion as there were members in the group. There were six such issues raised. The first three had to do in one way or another with the matter of correcting the language habits of the students. These three questions assume that there will in effect be differences between the language behavior of the child and a 'normal language behavior' of some kind. Sometimes this difference is a difference between the child's use of the standard spoken dialect and the adult use--a difference between a mature and immature use of a single dialect. Sometimes this difference is a difference between the spoken dialect of a minority group in the community from which the child comes and the spoken dialect of the majority group in the community. Sometimes this difference is a difference between the spoken dialect of a minority in the classroom and the spoken dialect of the majority in the classroom. In any case, it is assumed that with reference to some standard, real or fictional, teachers will have abundant opportunity to point out 'errors' in the child's use of either the spoken or written language. One can point the issues which are concerned with this assumption in this way:

Does the teacher have an obligation to correct the speech habits of the children in such a way as to insure that the child acquires the phonological, syntactic, and morphological patterns of a particular spoken dialect in preference to the patterns which he brings to school?

Does the teacher have an obligation to correct the writing habits of the children in such a way as to insure that the child acquires the syntactic and orthographic systems of educated written English?

Does the teacher have an obligation to correct the language habits of the child--whether spoken or written--so as to lead him to avoid socially unacceptable usages (whether of this sort--"He rided me home," or of this sort--"Cool it, man"--or of this sort--"a dirty, crazy, fucking world"). The spectrum of opinions on the matter of correction ranged from those (or, more properly, the one) who held that under no circumstances should one correct a child's language, to those (again, more properly, the one) who held that inasmuch as the schools are in and of and for a democratic society, the schools have an obligation to teach the language habits of the majority in that society--standard written English, well edited, and the standard upper middle class spoken American dialect. In between these two positions were spokesmen for some kinds of correction and not others, and spokesmen for this norm or that norm or local options on norms.

So much for the three issues concerning "correction." The other three issues raised concerned rather more fundamental questions:

Does the school have an obligation to insure and require that the graduate of the school can read?

Does the school have an obligation to insure and require that the graduate has some proficiency in calligraphy, is even minimally able to put pen to paper and, in the simplest sense, to write?

Does the school have an obligation to insure and require that the graduate can "compose," whether by means of tape recorder, or by means of typewriters, or by means of writing instruments such as pens and pencils?

Concerning these questions, the group manifested the same polarity as it had concerning the first three policy questions: one member of the group answered all questions in the negative (maintaining that it was in fact bad pedagogy, if not in fact impossible for the school to assume responsibility for insuring that all graduates acquire any single skill or proficiency, no matter how minimal) and one member of the group answered all the questions in the affirmative (insisting that it was inconceivable that a school should graduate a student who did not know how to read or how to write)--as in the expression "He can write his name"--or how to compose--as in the expression "He composed a poem." A curious thing happened in the discussion of these three issues, though, for although initially the majority opinion within the group favored the latter position, toward the end of the discussion the majority opinion had moved either toward uncertainty or toward the former position. Concerning these questions generally two kinds of arguments tended to come in: first, the technological arguments a la McLuhan, and second, pedagogical arguments a la Holt, Neill, and Kohl, although the arguments which members of the group put were rather more extreme than any of the arguments which those three gentlemen would take voluntarily.

What are the communication skills which will be demanded of competent adults by American society in 1990? Why require a school to spend its time making students competent (or 'incompetent') in skills for which they have no ability or need, and in which they have no interest? As these arguments were elaborated and articulated, more and more of the discussants came to feel that there were issues here which they had not previously been aware of, yet issues in which they had a profound professional interest: several expressed the feeling with some chagrin, that they had not previously thought about the problem clearly enough to know what they thought about it; several expressed the feeling that the arguments undermined their previously unquestioned assumptions, and a good many of the discussants felt that they would like to see some carefully reasoned arguments and analyses concerning these questions, that these were deserving questions which needed airing.

Reporter: Les Whipp
University of Nebraska

## IV.

## The Study of Society and Imaginative Creation

A. "Myth and Story and the Elementary School Child": Group II

B. "The Understanding of Myth and the Elementary School": Appendix I

C. "Myth and Symbolism": Appendix II

/The study of "myth," in its various senses, bears on our understanding of what societies are and how they envisage the world, of what kids are and how they see things (in terms of their *mythoi*), and of what literature is--what literary works which make use of the materials of myth mean. Group II explored the study of "myth" in all of these senses. It might equally well have looked at other creations of man, but its look at this kind of creation at least defines a range of problems facing those who create curricula, those who train teachers of elementary school children, and those who, teaching elementary school children, aspire to understand what their life means to them._/

# MYTH AND STORY AND THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILD

## Group II

The group which considered the place of systems of myth in the life and education of the elementary school child more-or-less agreed to work with a definition of mythology, or myth, which treats it as a narrative that members of a society know, which they believe to be a 'true account' of something that has happened. The group, perhaps artificially, excluded non-literary and non-verbal kinds of behavior--totems, games and so on--and more-or-less ruled out of the discussion non-verbal behavioral patterns that we might wish to call adumbrations of 'myths'. In looking at what social science and English can do with the myths of other cultures in the elementary school, the group asked, "What common or universal mythological features do we find in groups of narratives from society to society?" We never really answered this question--whether all or most systems of mythology deal with accounts of the creation of the earth or the relationship of man to the physical world or the creation of natural phenomena or moral eidola: the definitions of mythology most of us know. We somewhat avoided the issue by falling back on a definition--"A narrative that some members of a society know, that they believe to be a true account of something that has happened." Thus, what can or should be done in elementary schools or in the training of teachers in systems of comparative mythology was not a question which we could answer; we could pose the question.

We did agree that one should not, in the elementary school, teach one system of mythology exclusive of all others; we should probably devote our attention to teaching a series or a set of mythologies, and our discussion concerned how this should be done. As we spent most of our time with the question of the objectives or of the values of teaching mythology in the elementary school in the first place, we mentioned reasons or objectives which may be worth discussion among members of the American educational community generally: one reason for teaching mythology that a number of us elicited is that mythology is a part of our tradition--whether it be our literary tradition or our social tradition; it remains a very important part of our tradition; and for that reason in itself it is of great value to teaching in a school system.

But we had more profound reasons having to do with understanding. To understand mythology is to understand the art whereby the human animal discovers his relationship to the world; popular conception to the contrary, it is a part of the analytic process whereby the human animal working in society categorizes and organizes his environment.[1] And it is also part of the process whereby a society discovers the basic principles according to which it will deal with what is around it. Most of us agreed that we should not attempt to teach the mythology of a particular Western or non-Western society separate from the social and ecological circumstances which give rise to the mythology and which are 'analyzed' in the myth-system.

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[1] Cf. Claude Levi-Strauss, La Pensee Sauvage (Ed. note).

We touched briefly on some psychological considerations. We generally held that the creation of myth serves a people's psychological needs as well as its needs for analysis of the environment and social cohesion. One obvious psychological need which people have is the need to reduce anxiety, and one of the means of reducing anxiety and arriving at answers is by means of creating myths; people also need a sense of competency and the creation of myth provides for the competent handling of one's environment or for the sense that one is handling it competently.

Finally, if one asks the question "What kind of understanding must the teacher and the trainer of teachers have of the personally held mythology of the child?" one may answer it as did Nancy Modiano and Dorothy Howard:

> One may illustrate what one can learn of the personally held mythologies of children by looking at children's play customs. The study of children's traditional play customs has been going on over a period of 75 or 100 years--that is the collection of them; but it is just now that we are beginning to seriously ask the question: "What do they mean to the children?" and "What can they mean to us as educators?" The children's games and play rituals that they transmit from one generation of children to another--and have been transmitting from one generation of children to another for hundreds of years--indicate that the names of the games, their vocabularies, as well as the actions in the games that accompany the words and sounds, are a figurative language--a metaphoric language. They are dramatic play: the rules that go along with the games--the taboos in the play--operate as a cohesive device to hold the group together as an operating social entity. The verbal aspects of the lore are as yet little explored; and we're now asking first "What are the facts about children's traditional play customs, and what do they mean in the educational process of the child?" What does he bring to school with him that he has learned from other children on the playground? What does he bring to school with him in the way of mythology and folklore that he has learned from his parents and from other people in the community? Another question that we're asking is: What should college students know in order to work with children as elementary teachers later? And we can begin with asking the college students the same questions that we asked the children, to get the same information from them as individuals.
>
> Games can serve as a means by which we learn about children's culture, their system of beliefs, their mythology--just as games can and do serve to teach children their own culture; we speak here of something more than simple dramatic play, or imitative play. Highly organized games teach children the culture in which they live. For instance, if in our dominant culture we have many games which serve to

teach children in the prepubescent stage team play, we also are cognizant of the fact that team play (the capacity to operate in a bureaucracy, getting along with one's peers) is essential for survival in our dominant culture. And one of the principal ways in which children learn the essential--and learn this from one another, not so much from teachers--is through their games.

Consider, for instance, Red Light, Green Light; Red Rover; the home-free-all devices that our children have in hide-and-seek and tag--in which all of the players are a team acting against the authority figure who is called "It" usually. While "It" has authority to wield against the other members of the playing group--by catching them, by finding them, by giving them instructions, nevertheless there are opportunities which allow a child to act on behalf of the group to help his team win. "It" of course never wins. Now in other cultures the same type of game with the same external structure may serve to teach children just the opposite mythology--games where one loses by not joining "It" and becoming an authority figure or where the authority figure is so destructive that you lose by getting caught by the authority, and everyone runs away each on his own from this awesome figure. For instance, a game that is found in Australia, that is found in Mexico among peasants, that is found in the Mezo-American highlands among Indians and that is found in the Negro ghettos of the Northern cities and probably in the southern Negro communities and white communities, is one in which the children's playing group stands together--perhaps in a circle--with one figure outside--the "It" figure or the authority figure. The authority figure threatens the group--all this through rhyme. The group sings a little rhyme and asks the authority figure, "What are you doing now?" The authority figure tells them and each time the statement is a little more threatening; he is getting dressed, ready to get out, ready to leave the house and go after them, ready to chase after them.

In the world of the Mexican peasant, the authority figure is a wolf (symbolically a predatory male): first the wolf is getting dressed; he's putting on his pants, he's putting on his shirt and so on. Then he closes the door; and, then, after the last verse he says, "And here I come now!" And the children flee screaming from this wolf. The child who is caught becomes the horrible authority figure chasing after the others. In Bedford-Styvessant and in Australia it's not a wolf; it's a witch--a matriarchal figure.

Another is the game which in Australia is called Botany Bay. The Mexican peasants call it by another name. Our hunch is that in similar authoritarian folk societies similar games exist. In many of them, if not most of them, the central authority figure teases each individual in the group one-by-one until that individual capitulates, joins the authority figure, and then the two of them can gang up on some member in the group, and so on, until there is --not a winner--but a loser in the game. This kind of study can tell teachers and trainers of teachers something of the 'myths' with which education deals--the operative myths.

Playground lore, in addition to telling us more about children and what children learn from and teach each other, can instruct us in how children learn from one another. What are the psychologic (pedagogic) techniques by which the child-teacher so successfully teaches his play-ways to others and by which the others learn so thoroughly--and in most cases effortlessly? [1]

Reporter: Ned Hedges
University of Nebraska

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[1] Nancy Modiano and Dorothy Howard.

Appendix I:

## THE UNDERSTANDING OF MYTH AND THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

### Group II

In our exploration of the possibilities inherent in a study of mythology by elementary school pupils we spent quite some time discussing the anthropologist's definition of a myth; and after much questioning of our consultant, Dr. Oliver, we agreed to accept his definition. Loosely quoted, it went something like this: "A myth is a narrative which people of a society know and believe to truthfully represent something that has happened." In a discussion of this definition it was assumed to be understood that every culture has used this form of expression in order that people might better explain their own position in relation to the universe. Once this definition had been accepted by most of the members of the group, the question then arose, "How can this concept be presented to elementary school children?" One member of the group seriously doubted that this could be successfully accomplished since it had not been within his experience that even college students could interpret the symbolism involved and since they frequently had difficulty in articulating the actual concepts. I made the point that perhaps the difficulty had been that the young people to whom he referred had not embarked upon discussion related to the cultural significance of mythology at an early enough age, and that perhaps what we needed were some better techniques for introducing these concepts to very young children. It seemed to me that one thing that would be essential in such a presentation would be to avoid the temptation of handing children a model and then asking them through processes of deduction to arrive at some conclusions regarding the essential qualities and structure of this model. It was suggested that instead we establish some conditions whereby children would be encouraged to construct a myth (without ever using the word 'myth' in our explanation) and then, immediately following the writing of individual myths, present a well-known myth so that comparisons could be made. The example I used dealt with an Alaskan myth which attempts to explain the way in which the sun, moon and stars came to be in the skies. I suggested that if the cultural concepts basic to this myth were to be introduced at the second-grade level, I would begin by conducting a general discussion with these young children of these various physical phenomena in the sky and asking them to speculate freely about how these came to be. During this discussion pupils would be encouraged to use their imaginations in developing whatever account appeared logical. In this manner children would be directly involved in the process of constructing a 'myth'; and this experience could then be made analogous to the experiences of ancient peoples in attempting to explain to their own satisfaction the way in which the sun and the moon and the stars came to be in the sky. Immediately following an exercise of this kind involving the children, one version of the Alaskan myth might be presented so the children might see that a body of literature has been handed down to us as a direct result of man's attempt to explain his position in the universe; thus, hopefully, one dimension of mythology might take on new meaning.

Reporter: Virginia Jones
University of Nebraska Participant

Appendix II:

## MYTH AND SYMBOLISM

### Group II

We had a good deal of difficulty with the question "How do we get children to understand the symbolic nature of mythology?" We had agreed on a working 'definition' of 'mythology' as meaning a narrative that some members of a society 'know that they believe' to be a true account of something that has happened; that is, we were dealing primarily with 'cultural' or a 'social' mythology produced by a society in an oral-aural situation (though it may be available to us now in a written and 'literary' form). But we were not always consistent: for instance our talk about the composition of myth by children did not, at first, we think, display an awareness that we were talking about kinds of mythology different from the transmitted explanatory narrative of a group; what children create in imitation of mythic creation does not--possibly cannot--have the force or shared quality of a culturally created mythology which has behind it the force of the whole group's acceptance.

Our talk about the understanding of myth as symbol turned on the creation of it; we touched briefly on how mythologies are created by a 'society.' Any single literary rendering may reshape the intrinsic symbolism of a social myth; what we have in the written 'myth' may be a 'recording of a myth' socially created and transmitted but such a 'recording' may also incorporate a transformation of the myth's original social symbolism. We spent most of our time and controversy talking about how we could get children to create myths; one may be able to ask the child to write something 'symbolic of the unknown' to explain and organize his existence--to find images, metaphors or analogies between what he knows is the world and what he cannot know or even vice-versa. And perhaps the best way to do this is to present the child an event or an object for which he does not already have an explanation and to allow him the opportunity to exercise his own imagination around the problem of forming a story--the parable explanation of a phenomenon. The completeness of his success can be measured in terms of how well his story 'satisfies' the phenomena he was given to start with; such a story might explain 'why', a story as to why a can which has been filled with steam and corked will collapse when cold water is poured on it; at a more difficult level it might be the making up of a story as to why clouds hang where they do. The critical factor is the ingenuity of the teacher in finding something that would make a challenging experience for the student who seeks to find images or correspondences between what is known in his experience and what he can make from his imaginative experiences to explain the unknown.

We came to no final answer as to "How we get children to understand the symbolic nature of myth." The question has to do with the understanding of literary symbolism generally--not with myth specifically; the understanding of the symbolic nature of any object or narrative or symbol-system must be an understanding built up over a long period of time, through a long series of experiences. Such an understanding cannot effectively--need not effectively--be communicated to children at one specific point in their education.

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